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Men of the Kingdom

Luther: The Leader

By

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To My Wife

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FOREWORD

In preparing this brief and popular life of Martin Luther I encountered two chief difficulties. The first was to select and condense the material. It would have been easier to write two large volumes than a brief account. No doubt I have related a number of events which some will think might have been omitted, while others may be looking in vain for incidents which, in their judgment, ought to have been included. I have endeavored to present the main features of the life and work of the great leader in accordance with the general object of the series, "Men of the Kingdom."

My second difficulty has been the language. While it is not easy to render Luther's pointed and trenchant German into idiomatic English, the difficulty is so much the greater for one whose mother tongue is the language of Luther.

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BOOK I

THE MAKING OF THE LEADER

CHAPTER I.

THE PEASANT'S SON.

Out of the dungeon in which John Huss was imprisoned before he was burned at the stake in the year 1415 he wrote the words: "They may kill a goose [the word Huss meaning in the Bohemian language a goose] but a hundred years from now a swan will arise which they will not be able to kill."

Those were prophetic words. Not a hundred years elapsed when the man of destiny was born, whose voice, mighty and penetrating, could not be stifled by fire and smoke; whose words ran like wildfire through Europe, and shook the very foundations of the most stupendous ecclesiastico-political system that the world had ever seen.

The ancestors of Martin Luther lived near the little village of Möhra in the Thuringian Mountains. They were sturdy, honest, hard-working peasants, possessing the elements that make for strength of character, power of will, firmness of purpose under the pressure of adverse circumstances, although lacking the more subtle traits of refined culture and gentleness. "I am the son of a peasant," Luther was often heard to say; "my father, my grandfather, and all my ancestors were genuine peasants; afterwards my father turned to be a miner."

Hans and Margaretha Luther, Lutherr, Luder,

or Lüdher—the name is spelled differently—moved to the little town of Eisleben, where, on November 10, 1483, a son was born to them. He was baptized on the following day, receiving the name of the saint of that day, Martinus. A few months later we find the family in Mansfield, where the elder Luther found work in the mines.

In that quaint old town, perched on the side of a steep mountain, Martin Luther was reared in poverty and amid hardships. "My father was a poor miner and my mother carried the wood from the forest on her back; they both worked their flesh off their bones in order to bring up their children." Martin had three younger brothers and as many sisters, and the care of their household was a heavy burden for the parents. The pictures which we possess of them show faces into which toil and exposure and care had written deep furrows and many wrinkles, and features which were made hard by incessant work.

The home training was exceedingly stern, even cruel. The rod reigned supreme. "On account of a paltry nut," the mother punished the boy, "till the blood flowed." It was the experience of his early childhood that taught him in later years to advise parents "to join kindness to sternness, and place the apple next to the rod." "Children ought not to be beaten too severely. My father once flogged me so cruelly that I fled away from him, and came to bear a grudge against him. It was a long time until he again won my confidence."

When Martin was five years of age he was sent to school. School life in those days was far from be-

ing a delightful episode. With many a blow of hand and rod the schoolmaster hammered into the young minds the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the elements of reading and writing, and also the rudiments of Latin grammar. Martin tells us that in the course of a single morning he was beaten not less than fifteen times.

But we never hear a word of complaint, nor do we read that he ever found fault with his parents. "They meant it well from the depth of their hearts," he says; "but they did not know how to distinguish the dispositions to which punishment is to be adapted."

It would be a great mistake to look upon Luther's parents as cruel, heartless, void of all feelings of love and sympathy for their children. They were ready to take upon themselves all sorts of hardships, and to make sacrifices for the benefit of their family. But they could not break away from the stern, legal spirit of the Dark Ages which was ruling everywhere; in the family and in the school. It was their famous son who, in later years, preached and lived the gospel of love and sunshine, of happiness and mirth in the home life. His ideal was that the mutual relations between parents and children ought to be the reflection of the relation between the Father in heaven and His children on earth.

Luther's training was intensely religious. His parents were pious people, and they desired to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord. It was fear, indeed, that was implanted into the young minds. The popular religion of those days was by no means a source of joy and happiness. It was

full of the remnants of ancient heathendom, which the Church had not succeeded or had not cared to drive out. Christianity was interwoven with crude superstitions. Figures of devils and witches perpetrating terrible deeds, tormenting the bodies and souls of children and grown persons, bewitching the cattle, causing sickness and misfortune of every kind, filled the minds of the common people. Many a dreadful story of diabolical influences and deeds was told by Luther's parents and their friends at the fireside, and the children, shivering with fear and with eyes wide open, listened to those tales and believed them literally true, as did their elders.

And how distorted were the ideas about Christ! He was not the children's Friend, the revealer of God's love and mercy; He was looked upon as the terrible avenger of disobedience and wrong. Says Luther: "From early childhood I was accustomed to turn pale and tremble whenever I heard the name of Christ mentioned, for I was taught to look upon Him as a stern and wrathful Judge. We were taught that we ourselves had to atone for our sins, and since we could not make sufficient amends or do acceptable works, our teachers directed us to the saints in heaven, and made us call upon Mary the Mother of Christ and implore her to avert from us Christ's wrath, and make Him inclined to be merciful to us." He also prayed to St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin, and to St. George, these being the special patron saints of the city of Mansfeld. The story of St. George's fight with the dragon made a deep and lasting impression upon Martin's mind,

and filled him with the ambition likewise to fight the foes of God and of the Church.

Thus grew up the youth who, in the future, was to fight the Church and her visible head, and was destined to be a leader of men. The severe discipline at home and in school, in connection with the wrong notions of God inculcated on his mind, cast a gloom over the early years of Martin Luther's life. It made him a timid boy. It wounded his soul. It crushed his spirit for a while. But it also gave him a keen sense of sin, it made his conscience highly sensitive, and thus became part of the preparation for his life's work.

CHAPTER II.

STUDENT DAYS.

A GREAT and noble ambition filled honest Hans Luther. His oldest son, Martin, was to be a lawyer. In his day-dreams he saw him robed in the splendid gown of a high justice, perhaps the counselor of princes and kings. For this end he and his wife were willing patiently to toil along, to stint themselves even of the necessities of life and save their hard-earned pennies. For it was a long way which led to that goal; it would take many a year of schooling, and would cost many a florin.

When a boy of fourteen, Martin, together with another lad from Mansfeld, was sent to Magdeburg. There the Lollards kept a school, which was well known, not only for thorough learning, but also for sound and earnest piety. Like hundreds of students at that time, the two boys had to beg their way to Magdeburg, and while attending school they relied upon the liberality of well-meaning citizens to supply their needs. Instruction was free, but the students were required to provide their own lodgings and meals. The usual way was for a company of poor lads to band themselves together and sing in front of the houses of wealthy citizens. Sometimes they would be invited to a meal; at other times they would receive the remnants of a repast, or at least some slices of bread.

We do not know much of Luther's course of study at Magdeburg. Evidently the type of piety prevailing there made a deep impression upon his soul. "I have seen with my own eyes," he said later, "a Prince of Anhalt, a pious man, but misled by those popish murderers of souls, going about in the streets, barefooted, clad in the hood of a begging friar, bent under the load of a heavy burden, and begging for bread. He was emaciated by vigils and fasting and other mortifications, so that there was nothing left of him but skin and bones. Whoever beheld him was filled with veneration, and felt ashamed of his own worldly aspirations."

After a year had gone by his father decided to send Martin to Eisenach, probably because in that city the boy was nearer home, and also because he was in hopes that some relatives of Frau Margaretha who lived there would take a kindly interest in him. In this expectation he was mistaken. As heretofore, Martin had to sing and beg for his daily bread. Several times the embarrassments and discouragements of his poverty disheartened him so that he made up his mind to return to his home and become a miner like his father.

But Providence had mapped out a different plan of life for this boy. When he had acquired the discipline resulting from the long struggle with poverty a great change took place. Frau Cotta, the wife of a wealthy merchant in Eisenach, had often noticed the sweet, strong notes of the little scholar's voice as they rang out through the church or in her own court-yard. She took a liking to him, and offered him a place at her table and in her family.

And so it happened that the stately old house facing the market-place in Eisenach became the home of Martin Luther. It is still standing; the centuries have left it unchanged, and every year it is visited by hundreds of tourists. Blessed be the memory of that noble woman, one among many who followed her, who brought into the dreary life of a poor, struggling youth the influences of gentleness and refined culture, and thus helped to give to the world a life enriched and enlarged by all that makes for purity of home-training and breadth of culture.

A new life opened to young Luther. Free from care and anxiety as to his sustenance, he was now able to devote his whole time to his studies, and the rich talents of his nature sprang forth into promising buds. More important yet for his future work were the influences which surrounded him in the Cotta home. A new element to which before this time he was a stranger entered into his education. He now learned to know the finer and gentler traits of good breeding; those subtle influences that elevate life above the mere struggle for existence and give to it its peculiar charm. He could indulge now in his love for music. It was Frau Cotta herself who put the lute into his hands and helped to develop that musical talent which afterwards brought good cheer and consolation to thousands of hearts, and stirred others to faithful fighting in the cause of the Lord.

The three years spent in the Cotta home at Eisenach were the happiest years of his youth. Sunny days those were, of quiet study and of refined asso-

ciations, of the enjoyment of music and other innocent pleasures of healthy boyhood.

The time arrived when he was to enter upon his university studies, and in the summer of 1501 the name of "Martinus Ludher ex Mansfeldt" was entered upon the matriculation book of the University of Erfurt. His father's financial condition was materially improved, owing to his industry and thrift. He was now in a position to support his son, thus enabling the young student to prosecute his studies without embarrassment, and even to purchase some books of his own.

Erfurt was at that time the most renowned university in Germany. Students from all parts of Europe were attracted to this seat of learning, and it was a common saying that, "Whoever wants to study thoroughly must needs go to Erfurt." Before entering upon the professional studies, the student had to go through extended courses in logic, dialectics, rhetoric, all of them being comprised under the general term of philosophy. These studies were of a formal nature. Scholasticism had reared its imposing edifice, in which the sum total of human learning was systematized and made to serve the theology of the Church. Science was the handmaid of theology, bound to the doctrines of the Church. Her office was not to investigate in order to discover the truth. Absolute truth was contained in the doctrines of the Church, and the only work that science and philosophy were expected to do, was to expound the teaching of the Church, and, if necessary, to defend it. Whatever the Church teaches is absolutely true. The idea that philosophy

or science should ever lead to results differing from the established doctrines was simply preposterous.

With chains of iron the Church had fettered to her chariot, not only the temporal power of princes and kings, but also the intellectual life at the seats of learning. Every step in the career of student and teacher was an additional tie to the Church. Matriculation and graduation, the beginning of the scholastic year and the end of it, were celebrated by Church services. Every graduate had solemnly to pledge "to teach nothing that was in contradiction to the doctrines of the Church and her approved teachers, and to report at once to the dean whenever he heard that any member of the faculty was sowing the seed of heretical opinions."

It looked as if man's intellectual faculties had no more room to assert themselves in research or discovery, and therefore they busied themselves with fruitless discussions about forms and modes of thought. Scholarship was not in contact with the life of the people; it was shut up in the cloisters and university halls. The schools trained subtle rhetoricians, who could split hairs but who had no appreciation of the needs of the masses about them. The scholars lived in a world of their own, unreal and unproductive of any good.

The years devoted to those studies might be looked upon as a dead loss, yet Luther ever afterwards was thankful for the mental discipline they gave him. His mind was clear and logical, with a trend toward abstruse reasoning. Just as St. Paul centuries before him, was versed in rabbinical learning; as John Wesley after him had cause to praise

God for the honest art of reasoning, for discovering and refuting subtle fallacies, acquired in the course of his university training,—so Luther was trained in the modes of thinking and arguing to which his age was accustomed, and he became thoroughly familiar with that system of philosophy and theology which, in later years, he assailed.

No man can be a leader of men who does not in the highest degree possess a knowledge of the men of his time; not only of their manner of living and feeling, but also of their way of thinking and arguing. He must at the same time be in advance of his age and in close touch with his age. The dreamer may see visions of future betterments, the true prophet not only sees a vision as from afar, but he is also able, by virtue of his knowledge of men, to lead them on to the realization of his vision. We shall see later on how Luther gave the most important impulses to the development of modern scholarship. The modern idea of education and learning in its application to the life of the individual and of the community is a direct result of the Reformation. But the Reformation was not merely an attempt to restore old things; it marks a turning point in the history of mankind, and shows the way to new things and conditions. Luther was a Reformer, but he was more; he was a leader.

There were signs of a coming change. The new humanistic learning began slowly to wend its way into the old university halls. The Renaissance, which was in fact an intellectual reformation, was widening its sphere of influence. It was a revolt from the barren metaphysical subtleties of scholas-

ticism, a return to the fountains of intellectual strength and æsthetic beauty as exemplified in the literature and art of the Greek and Roman civilization; a turning away from the monastic ideal of ascetic other-worldliness to the classical ideal of thorough enjoyment of everything that this life can give in its most perfect and beautiful form.

A conflict between this new scholarship and the traditional theory of life and learning was unavoidable. In Erfurt the friction was not yet apparent at the time when Luther was a student. Jodotus Truttvetter and the other venerable professors kept on discoursing upon the fine points in metaphysical distinctions, while outside of the lecture-rooms many students drank in the charming drafts of classic literature. Luther read Latin authors assiduously. He formed friendship with some young men who afterwards became renowned leaders of the Humanists, as, for instance, Crotus Rubianus, John Lange, and others. But while these studies enlarged his intellectual vision and made him feel the more keenly the inexpressible dryness and uselessness of the philosophical studies, as they were carried on at that time, in comparison with the throbbing life of the resurrected classical world, he very soon found that the deepest needs of human nature can not be satisfied by these studies. Art, beauty, sensual or intellectual enjoyment even in its most refined form, can never solve the great problems of the human soul. Martin Luther derived his strength, not from culture, but from religion. The Church cultivated religion, it is true; but it was a caricature of genuine religion, and it had no con-

nection with culture. The Renaissance cut loose from religion, and cultivated culture pure and simple. Luther united true religion with an appreciation of true culture. Religion without culture tends to fanaticism; culture without religion easily runs into licentiousness. The right blending of both leads to ideal manhood.

Luther's religious life remained unchanged during his student days. "In all those years," said he, "I did not hear one truly Christian lecture or sermon from any one." Yet he was a conscientious and pious student. Says a contemporary of his, John Mathesius: "Although he was by nature a buoyant and frolicsome young fellow, he began his day's work every morning with prayer, taking as his motto, 'He who prays aright has finished his studies more than half.' He missed no lesson, asked questions of his teachers, and sought the opportunity to converse with them; he reviewed often with his fellows, and when there were no lectures he was found in the library."

It was in the university library that his eyes fell for the first time upon a whole Bible. He had never in his life seen a Bible, and now was greatly astonished that this Latin Bible contained many more texts and portions of the Gospels and Epistles than were contained in the prayer-books or were read in the churches. Turning over the leaves he glanced at the story of Hannah and Samuel. He had never heard it before, and on reading it he was fascinated by its simplicity and religious fervor. From the depth of his heart he prayed to God to make him as pious and as useful as was Samuel of old. Hence-

forth he was filled with an eager longing to own a Bible himself, and he prayed that God in His great mercy would grant him the favor to possess a copy of that wonderful Book.

Meanwhile he finished the prescribed course of study. In 1502 he received the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy, and in 1505 the higher degree of Master, taking second rank in a class of seventeen candidates. He was now to enter upon his law studies, and, in view of his gifts and his industry, everybody felt confident that a splendid career leading to distinction and fortune was opening before him.

CHAPTER III.

UNDER THE MONK'S HOOD.

A COMPANY of merry students was gathered on a summer evening in the year 1505 in Martin Luther's room at Erfurt. He had invited his friends to a feast, and they were passing the time playing, singing, and merrymaking. One of the jolliest was young Luther himself. "Friends," said he when they were about to part, "to-day you see me for the last time; I have decided to become a monk." Peals of laughter greeted this announcement; it was considered a good joke. And yet Luther was in deep earnest. He had invited his friends to take leave of them for good. Two days later, on July 17th, they escorted him reluctantly, and vainly endeavoring to dissuade him, to the convent of the Augustinian Friars. The heavy cloister doors opened and closed again. Martin Luther had said adieu to the world, and was a monk.

What had caused this change?

What had caused Abraham of old to leave his kin and his friends and to set out on a journey the goal of which he did not know? What had impelled Moses to turn his back upon a life of distinction and splendor and to join himself to a nation of despised slaves? What had driven Saul of Tarsus to forsake a career of brilliant achievements as

a teacher of the law and to become a follower of the hated Nazarene? What has induced hundreds of others, in all times and among all nations, to disappoint the fondest hopes, to throw away the choicest advantages of worldly wealth and power, to trample upon their cherished plans of noble ambition, and to enter upon a life of obscurity, of self-denial, of humiliation, and self-abnegation?

A strange thing, this heart of ours! Let it once feel the touch of the Eternal, and the whole world of things visible and material shrinks back into insignificance. When will we learn that nothing which this world can give is, after all, able to satisfy the deepest longings of our nature, to quench its thirst, to give it lasting peace? "Our heart is created to Thee, O Lord!" exclaims St. Augustine, "and it can not rest until it resteth in Thee."

Luther's decision was not the outcome of some sudden impulse or some passing excitement. Several recent experiences, no doubt, hastened it, but the course of his whole inner life tended to this crisis.

He was of a deeply religious disposition, and his whole education at home and in school had been intensely religious. "What must I do to be saved?" was the question of paramount interest with him. The Church had but one answer, namely: Do good works, and thereby conciliate an angry God. "O when will I become pious and render satisfaction, so that I may have a merciful God?" he cries out.

The great dread, haunting his life from early youth, was the thought of the impending judgment. A sickness in Erfurt brought him near death's

door; having recovered, he accidentally cut open one of the arteries with his sword which he, like all students, was carrying constantly, and he was in danger of bleeding to death before medical aid could be summoned. An intimate friend of his had died very suddenly. All these incidents caused his thoughts to turn upon the possibility of being called, perhaps in a very short time, before the Judge of all mankind.

But here was the conflict. Luther was anything but a recluse. With all his deep and earnest piety he was open to the enjoyments that come to man from study, from music, from art, from congenial friendship, from success. But all these things were considered "worldly" and, in fact, sinful. He was to study law, not so much because he felt particularly drawn to it, but because it was his father's desire and command. But the practice of law would lead him, more so than any other profession, into the "world;" his attention must needs be engrossed with things secular, and the Church had drawn a sharp line of demarcation between things secular and things spiritual.

The Church knew of only one kind of a holy life,—the ascetic life of a monk. He who tries to serve God in the world, surrounded with the cares of business or of a family, is in great danger of losing his soul; but even at best he can never attain to the ideal of a holy life. He alone who sacrifices everything connected with this world, who forsakes it and is dead to it—he alone is on the road that leads to perfection.

The New Testament idea of a life of sacrifice and service in the midst of the "world," the privilege of regarding the duties of this life as God-given duties, was practically unknown. It was Luther who in later years became the apostle of the gospel of "serving God by serving man," but at that time he still shared the erroneous notions of his age.

What was he to do? On the one side was life, bright, happy, flooded in sunlight, full of charming prospects; nay, even more, there was the explicit wish of his father; and was it not his duty to comply with the same? On the other side was the cloister, dark, dreary, full of mortifications. Choose he must. There was no middle way. Who can picture the struggles that were going on in the soul of the young Master of Philosophy? Only occasional remarks of later years lead us to suspect how fierce they were. In vain he sought peace in hard work, in vain in congenial company.

Finally he yielded. He brought the sacrifice.

Returning from a visit to his home he was overcome by a heavy thunder-storm. The strokes of lightning and the peals of thunder seemed to his terrified imagination the forebodings of the judgment day. He threw himself on the ground and exclaimed: "Holy Anna, help me! I will become a monk!"

The vow was made. It had to be carried out. It was hard, but the greater the sacrifice the more meritorious the obedience.

When the heavy portals of the monastery clanged behind him and the bars were fastened

again. Luther had no other idea but that he was separated from the world forever.

The great struggle was at an end. Was his soul satisfied? Had he found what he was looking for, namely, the peace that passes all understanding? We shall see presently.

Hans Luther was nearly beside himself when informed of his son's change of mind. All his hopes were shattered. All the sacrifices which he and his wife had cheerfully made for so many years were useless. A man of good common sense and accustomed to hard work, he had not much use for the "ignorant and lazy friars." When Martin insisted that he was following a Divine command the answer was: "God forbid that you are misled by a devilish deception! Did you never read that a son is to honor his father and mother?"

A few months later, when he lost two of his sons from the pestilence then raging, and when the rumor came that Martin had also died, his anger subsided to some extent. But although he himself, accompanied by a number of relatives and friends, came to hear his son read his first mass, and even presented him with twenty florins, he was never quite reconciled to the change of Martin's plans.

For several days after the 17th of July the friends were anxiously watching the gates of the monastery. To no purpose. The young novice did not appear, nor was any one allowed to see him.

A whole year passed by. His novitiate was at an end. "Frater Martinus" was to make the solemn vow by which he became a monk for the rest of his life. The convent was assembled in solemn convoca-

tion. The novice fell upon his knees, folded his hands over the book containing the rules of St. Augustine, and vowed: "I, Frater Martinus, confess and pledge obedience to God Almighty and to the Holy Virgin Mary, and to thee, Frater Winand, prior of this monastery, and to the general of the Order of St. Augustine, to live without property, in chastity, and in obedience to the rules of St. Augustine as long as I live." A consecrated hood was put on him. He prostrated himself on the floor in the form of a cross, while the assembly chanted the prayers of consecration, and when he arose he was a monk for his lifetime.

There were eight monasteries at Erfurt representing as many monastic orders. Luther chose the Augustinians because they were known both for the strictness of their rules and for the cultivation of theological learning. Luther's motive in becoming a monk was a purely religious one. He sought peace for his soul. But while worldly studies might prove to be a snare, theological scholarship was surely not to be despised, and so he became a member of the order that united both piety and learning. He had sold his law-books, but two Latin classics, Vergil and Plautus, he took with him into the monastery.

The rules as revised by John Staupitz, the vicar-general of the order, made it the duty of every monk to devote considerable time to study, more particularly to the study of the Bible. Each member of the convent was presented with a Bible for his individual use. Luther devoted himself to Biblical and theological studies with such diligence

and success that he soon became known as one of the most learned Augustinians.

However, learned pursuits were not allowed to take up too much of his time. Like every other novice he had to learn and comply with the rules which governed every hour day and night, touched every insignificant detail of action, as walking, kneeling, standing, looks, and words. At first he had to perform even the most menial services.

"Sic mihi, sic tibi." "You have to do what I had to do," was a common saying among the older monks. "Saccum per naccum." "Take the beggar's sack and go begging." It must have been humiliating for the Master of Philosophy to walk the streets of his university town and go to the neighboring villages begging for bread and cheese. The convent was richly endowed; it did not stand in need of begging. But begging was considered an excellent means for promoting humility, and therefore necessary for the friars. Some of the brethren, excelling more in ignorance and laziness than in true piety—for in spite of all regulations there were ignorant and lazy monks, and not a few of them—felt called upon to assist Brother Martinus in various ways in acquiring this most precious virtue, humility.

Willingly and cheerfully Luther subjected himself to every possible form of discipline and mortification. He was a model of monkish piety. "If ever a monk got to heaven by monkery, I would have gotten there," are his own words. No one, in any age, could surpass him in prayers by day and night,

in fasting, in vigils, self-discipline, and self-mortification.

And yet—had he found what his soul was looking for?

There was no mistake. He was as far from peace of conscience as ever. Like an unbearable burden, crushing all hope under its huge weight, lay upon him his sin. "Mea culpa; mea culpa!"—My sin, my sin! was the burden of his mind. His life had been moral and pure; there were no outward sins that rose up against him. But he felt the power of the sinful principle, as the most potent power of his nature, pervading and vitiating his whole being and keeping him away from God.

Could he not atone for his guilt by good works? He lived stricter than ever, wasting away his physical strength in his endeavors. "If I had continued, I would have tortured myself to death."

The fact of his enforced solitude augmented his morbid self-accusations. He had no one who could understand him, to whom he could open his heart, who could counsel and direct him. It was out of his own sad experience that he advised those who are in distress to turn to their Savior, and also to seek the companionship of experienced Christians, in order to escape from the evil thoughts that prey upon those who are solitary. He read the Bible, to be sure, but a veil was before his eyes. Christ was still, to his mind, the merciless Judge. The righteousness of God, which, according to St. Paul, was revealed in the Gospel, he took to mean the righteousness which metes out just punishment.

God never forsakes an upright man who gropes

his way in the darkness. He sends him rays of light that penetrate the mists of erroneous opinions with which his education, contemporaneous thought, false teaching of the Church, surrounded him, just as the wanderer in the mountains is sometimes enveloped in dense, dark fogs. Finally the time comes when the clouds burst, and he can walk in the full light of the freedom of a son of God.

"Thou art a fool," reproved his confessor; "God is not angry with thee; thou art angry with God."

"Brother," said to him a good old monk, looking into the haggard face of the penitent, "you must obey God and believe in the forgiveness of sins."

From no one did he receive more help than from the vicar-general of his order, Dr. John Staupitz. He was the only one who could understand his mental agonies. Superficial minds lack the ability of fathoming the anguish of an awakened conscience. Staupitz was a man who knew something of experimental religion. He was an evangelical at heart, although he never severed his connection with the Catholic Church.

No one else, perhaps, united all the qualities which enabled him to be the spiritual guide and counselor of this troubled mind. He was the descendant of a noble family, clearheaded, a man of broad culture, thorough scholarship, whose theology, though darkened somewhat by the prevailing scholasticism, was nurtured on the Bible. He was of a kind, sympathetic nature, and possessed in a singular degree the power to discern and appreciate the needs of whosoever applied to him for aid. Luther

never forgot the world of gratitude he owed to this man. "If Dr. Staupitz, or rather God through Dr. Staupitz, had not helped me out of my trials, I would have drowned in them and would have been in hell long ago."

Listen to some of the evangelical truths which Staupitz impressed upon Luther:

"You have an altogether wrong idea of Christ. Christ does not terrify; his office is to comfort."

"More than a thousand times I pledged that I would lead a life of piety, and I never did it. I see now that I can not live up to my pledges, and so I quit making pledges."

"The law of God says to us: Here is a high mountain; thou must cross it. Flesh and presumption vow: I will cross it. Conscience interposes: Thou canst not. Despair concludes: I will let it go."

"Trials are good and necessary, my brother; otherwise you would never amount to very much."

Those were the starting points for new currents of thought. They shed light upon a number of Scripture passages, especially in the Pauline Epistles. For days and weeks Luther would ponder words like these: "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith." Deeper and deeper he penetrated into the meaning of St. Paul's great doctrine, but just as he, from his solitary cloister cell, could see only a little speck of God's blue sky, so he had only faint glimpses of God's infinite love and tender mercy.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOLY CITY.

To MAKE a pilgrimage to Rome; to confess in the Holy City all his sins committed from his early youth; to visit the many sites, sacred to the memory of saints and martyrs; to avail himself of the rich indulgences offered there; to read mass in Rome,—had been a long cherished hope of the young monk. Hardly had he dared to look for its realization.

But all of a sudden, probably in the year 1511, he was sent by his superior, Dr. Staupitz, to Rome to assist in the settlement of some difficulties which had arisen in the management of the order. Accompanied by John von Mecheln, the prior of a Dutch convent, Luther crossed the Alps, and, after a weary journey afoot, the wanderers saw from afar the spires of the Holy City rising over the Campagna and gilded by the rays of the setting sun.

It was a great moment for pious Martin Luther. "Hail, thou Holy City!" he cried out, and, overcome by awe and reverence, he fell upon his knees. The sight of Rome might indeed fill any thinking mind with feelings of admiration, and overwhelm any pious soul with profound veneration. Rome was at that time the center, the very embodiment of the greatest political and spiritual power the world had ever seen. Empires, religions, civilizations had

changed in the course of the centuries; the power of Rome remained.

The city on the seven hills was in a former age the mistress of the pagan world. She had subdued the nations, she ruled them with an iron hand. She broke down the barriers between the peoples, and welded them into a great empire. Roman legions, Roman laws, Roman language, were dominant in all climes. The treasures of Greek art and philosophy, of Oriental wealth, of everything that human minds had discovered and invented, that human hands had wrought and achieved, were used by Rome as material to build up the tremendous structure of the Roman empire. The Roman emperor became in course of time the supreme ruler of the world. Even more than that: he became the visible representative of the Divine powers; he was adored as a God, and reigned as a God.

The ancient Roman empire declined and fell. The cities were sacked, the temples burned, the deities dethroned, the priests driven away, the armies vanquished, the laws abolished, the whole tremendous structure of the Græco-Roman civilization, reared to a dazzling height, tottered and fell. Barbarians roamed over the sites of ancient achievements and splendor.

But Rome remained. Pagan Rome became Christian Rome. Again she set out to conquer the world, with weapons more subtle, with tactics more diplomatic, and again she succeeded. A new Christian civilization arose upon the ruins of the old pagan world, and Rome was the dominating power. Step by step the great ecclesiastical statesmen and

master-builders had advanced during the past centuries towards the goal which they had constantly before their eyes; namely, to build up the visible kingdom of God on earth. Diplomacy, as well as arms, were resorted to as means to accomplish this end; but the most potent of all factors was religion.

Rome was the seat of the pope. The pope was the vice-regent of Jesus Christ, the ruler of God's kingdom on earth. God had given two swords for the purpose of promoting and defending His cause. The one represented the temporal power; it was wielded by the emperor, the kings, and the other temporal rulers. The other was the emblem of the spiritual power; it was in the hands of the pope. Temporal things are subservient to spiritual things; the temporal power must ever be at the disposal of the spiritual power. The rulers of the nations are to execute the biddings of the vice-regent of the highest ruler. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there was no European government that dared to defy these claims, arrogant as they certainly were.

Moreover, the successor of St. Peter had the absolute power to bind and loose on earth and in heaven. All through the Middle Ages the terrors of the judgment and the bliss of the world to come were intense realities to the minds of men. The great object of life was to flee from the wrath to come and to get to heaven. But salvation was possible only within the folds of the Church. "Extra ecclesiam nulla salus"—that is, "Outside of the Church there is no salvation"—was the accepted creed, and the Church was under the undisputed

control of her head, the pope. Every road led to Rome, and the thousands of ecclesiastical organizations that covered the European countries with the meshes of an immense net, looked to Rome for guidance and direction, for counsel and command.

There had been a time when, under the sign of the Golden Eagle, Roman legions, at the command of the Roman emperor, held the world conquered; now, when Luther saw the Eternal City, an army still vaster, more obedient, better disciplined, held the world conquered under the sign of the cross at the bidding of the Roman pope. The power which Rome yielded over the consciences of men was supreme.

Well might the poor monk cry out, "Salve Roma Sancta!"—Hail to thee, Holy Rome!—for that city, dimly visible at the distant horizon, was to him, as to millions of others, the very embodiment of everything that was holy and grand, yea, all that was divine.

Luther's visit lasted four weeks, long enough to see the wonders of the Eternal City, the ruins of the Coliseum, the baths of Diocletian, the Pantheon, and other remains of past glory. He visited also the catacombs and other places made sacred by the sufferings of the martyrs, and, above all, those churches and shrines where "special grace" could be obtained. "I was at Rome a crazy saint," is his comment in later years, "running to all the churches and monasteries, and believing all the stories that they tell. I also read one or ten masses at Rome, and I felt sorry that my father and mother were still alive, for I was anxious to redeem them from

purgatory by reading mass and doing other good works and saying prayers."

It is well known how he climbed on his knees the twenty-eight steps of the Scala Sancta—the identical staircase, as was believed, which formerly led up to the palace of Pilate in Jerusalem—in order to receive the rich blessings promised by several popes upon all who would perform this meritorious deed. But, somehow or other, Luther could not become sensible of any blessing. Again and again, intruding upon his devotion and disturbing him in his supplications, there came to him the words which St. Paul quoted from the prophecy of Habakkuk, "The just shall live by faith."

Even Rome did not give to his soul the peace which he longed for. On the contrary, his sojourn in the Holy City, brief though it was, sufficed to convince him that Rome could never supply the needs of his spiritual nature. The high ideals of the sanctity of the worship, of the saintly life of the pope and the other ecclesiastical dignitaries, which filled his own soul with holy aspirations and stimulated him to like endeavors, were rudely shattered. What he saw and heard in holy Rome was the very opposite from what he had expected. Instead of piety he found levity; instead of holiness he met lasciviousness; instead of seeing pure spirituality he beheld nothing but carnalmindedness, greed, and self-seeking. Religion was but the cloak which covered up shame and vice. The white garments of the Church, the bride of Christ, were polluted with the stains of the most disgraceful and carnal man-

ner of living. Wherever he turned he saw hypocrisy and sin.

When reading mass his whole being was filled with holy awe by the solemnity of the sacrament. Slowly, deliberately he pronounced the words of the Eucharist. But the Italian priests called impatiently, "Passa, passa!" that is, "Quick, quick! send the Son back to our blessed Virgin." All they cared for was to get through with the empty ceremony as rapidly as possible and receive their pay for it. He heard priests laughingly tell how they would say in Latin, instead of pronouncing the words of consecration, "Bread thou art and bread thou remainest; wine thou art and wine thou remainest." Everything that was to him an object of holy adoration was made the butt of blasphemous jests.

Could it be true what he heard of the private life of cardinals and popes? He was shown what purported to be a monument of the Papess Joanna, who, as the story went, was overtaken by the pangs of childbirth while taking part in a solemn procession. He was told incredible stories of the vices of Pope Alexander VI, who had died but a few years before (in 1503), as well as of his son Cæsar and his daughter Lucretia.

And all these things were told without a blush, without a tinge of sadness over the deplorable condition of the Church. If the German monk expressed his grief he was sneeringly called a fool. Says he: "Nobody can form an idea of the licentiousness, vice, shame that is in vogue in Rome. Nobody would believe it un-

less he could see it with his own eyes and hear it with his own ears. Rome was once the holiest city, now it is the vilest. It is true what has been said, 'If there be a hell, Rome must be built over it.'"

Yet in spite of all that he saw or heard, he still loved the grand old Church with his whole heart. He did not return from Rome an enemy of the Church nor even intending to reform it. The fiery denunciations of her practices date from a later period, when he viewed them in the new light that had dawned on him. But if ever a man left the "Holy City" thrust down from the heights of zeal and enthusiasm to the very depths of despair, wounded and crushed in spirit, full of keen and bitter disappointment, it was that plain, honest German monk.

However, this experience was but another step in his preparation. "I would not take a thousand florins for missing that visit to Rome. I would constantly fear that I wronged the pope. But now I can speak of what I have seen myself."

CHAPTER V.

PROFESSOR AND PREACHER.

THERE were two flourishing universities in the Saxon lands; one at Erfurt, the other only about seventy miles away, in Leipzig. It might seem as if there had been no need of a third one to be founded. But Leipzig belonged to Prince Albrecht, of Saxony, and Erfurt was in the hands of the Archbishop of Mainz, and therefore Elector Frederick, surnamed the Wise, deemed it necessary to have a university of his own. In the year 1502 he founded the University of Wittenberg, only forty miles from Leipzig.

The town chosen for the new school could not boast of many advantages. It consisted of not more than four hundred low, straw-thatched houses; the number of its inhabitants did not exceed three thousand, and they were mostly poor and unlettered. The country round about was sandy and barren; the sanitary conditions of the city were deficient, causing frequent visitations of the plague; the place was situated "at the borders of civilization."

In spite of these drawbacks the name of Wittenberg was destined to become one of the most renowned among the many seats of learning in Europe. It was here that Martin Luther spent

most of his life and did most of his work. He made the university not only the center of the Reformation, but, more than that, the starting-point of modern culture.

The income of the newly established school being very meager, the Elector called men to the pulpits of the two churches who could at the same time fill professors' chairs, and he also expected that the Augustinian convent located in Wittenberg would furnish a number of teachers. In order to accomplish this the vicar-general, Dr. Staupitz, who cooperated heartily with the Elector, was made dean of the theological faculty.

As early as 1508 Luther was transferred from Erfurt to Wittenberg, and appointed lecturer on moral philosophy. But in the following year we find him again at Erfurt, and it was not until his return from Rome that he became professor in Wittenberg. From 1512 to his death in 1545, he remained in this position. He always considered the work of a university professor his main work; all other activities were in connection with his university work. We shall soon see that Luther had an altogether new idea of the legitimate work of a university professor. He is not to spend his life in special research work exclusively, separate from the common, every-day world, with interests and aspirations wholly foreign to the welfare of the community in which he lives, but he is to be in close touch with the religious, social, and political movements of his time; a man who brings to bear the results of his studies on the great questions which agitate his contemporaries; a scholar who studies the prob-

lems of the past in order to understand the problems which confront his own age, and who has the courage to lead his people to a higher plane.

At first Luther had no desire whatever to assume the duties of a Doctor and Professor of Divinity. It took a long time before Staupitz succeeded in persuading him to be obedient to the call. "No good deed is done pursuant to man's own wisdom; every step must be done blindfolded, as it were. Thus I was drawn into the work of a teacher. If I had then known what I know now, ten horses could not have pulled me."

On the eighteenth day of October, 1512, after a formal disputation held in the university chapel, the Doctor's cap and ring, the signs of his degree, were presented to him, and he was now a Doctor of Divinity. The expenses were defrayed by the Elector.

Luther was now a Professor of Theology. Were his inward struggles ended? Had he found peace? Was he, to use a popular expression, a converted man? If so, when and how was he converted?

When was John Wesley converted? He had been a priest of the Church of England for several years, was a missionary to the heathen, and yet when he returned from America he wrote, "I found that I was never converted myself." This remarkable statement he modified in his later years by adding the words, "I am not so sure about that." Was John Wesley converted in that memorable night of May 28, 1738, when, in hearing some one read Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, he felt his heart strangely warmed? But several

months later he wrote, "I affirm that I am not a Christian now."

The spiritual history of these two great men has many points of similarity. Both were from youth deeply religious; both were brought up in strictly sacramentarian, High-Church principles; both led a clean life, and were striving after personal holiness; both were haunted by an overwhelming sense of sin and depravity; both were utterly sincere in their searching self-examination and self-abasement, sometimes morbidly so; both made a perfect surrender of their will—nothing can be a more perfect sacrifice than that which Luther made when entering the cloister, or Wesley after reading Thomas à Kempis and Jeremy Taylor; both read their Bibles unremittingly, passionately, yet both groped in darkness for many a year; both did everything that lay in their power to find peace with God—no effort was too exacting no self-effacement too painful; both carried the shackles of erroneous theological opinions, and it took years before they had shaken them off entirely.

The inner life of both was nourished on the Word of God, and it was the life-giving Word of the living God, received in simple faith, which gradually transformed their lives and their views. We can notice decisive steps, critical moments in their spiritual development; but their conversion was not a single dramatic act, but rather a process extending through a number of years.

The important question is not, When was he converted or how? but rather, Is he living the life of a child of God? Is he in fellowship with Christ?

Luther's struggles for the peace of his soul came certainly to an end during the first few years of his stay at Wittenberg.

Gradually he was led by his Biblical studies to see the full light of the Gospel truth. The books which he read and studied over and over again till they became part and parcel of his very being were St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians and the Book of Psalms. He began to see that the righteousness of God is not merely an attribute of the great Judge of mankind, but that God in His compassion freely gives His righteousness to the believer, and, together with this gift, He bestows also full salvation and life eternal. Having taken hold of this great truth, he was made free. "Now I became happy, now the whole of the Bible, even heaven itself, was open to me."

Listen to the words which in the month of April, 1516, he wrote to a fellow monk: "Now I would like to know about the state of your soul. Have you learned to despise your own righteousness and to put your trust in the righteousness of Christ alone? Many do not know the righteousness of God which is given us abundantly and freely in Christ; but they endeavor to do good works and depend on their own efforts, their own virtue, their own merits. You were full of this great error when you were here, and I was full of it. Even now I must fight against it, and have not finished. Therefore, my beloved brother, learn Christ and Him crucified. Learn to despair of thyself and to say to Him: 'Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am Thy sin. Thou hast assumed what was mine

and given me what was Thine. Thou hast assumed what Thou wast not, and hast given me what I was not.' If by our own exertions we could attain peace of conscience, why, then, did Christ die?"

What the young professor had experienced in his own soul he communicated to his students. His lectures were not formal philosophical or dogmatic dissertations. He poured out in them his very heart, testifying to the power of experimental faith. Says Melanchthon: "After a long and dark night there arose here in the university, according to the judgment of all religious and judicious persons, a new light. Here he pointed out the difference between the Law and the Gospel; here he refuted the erroneous opinion which dominated the schools and the pulpits; namely, that we could merit the forgiveness of our sins by our own works, and could become righteous in the eyes of God by the discipline of the law. He called men to the Son of God. Like John the Baptist he pointed them to the Lamb of God that bore our sins, and he showed that this favor is to be received by faith alone."

A new era commenced for theological studies in general, and for Biblical studies in particular, when Martin Luther entered upon his career as university professor. The Bible, especially in the original languages, was a book then almost unknown. One of Luther's colleagues, Dr. Karlstadt, had been a Doctor of Divinity seven years before he ever read the Bible.

Luther cut loose from scholastic philosophy and lectured on the Bible exclusively. Up to his time the Bible lectures, such as they were, constituted

merely a preparatory work from which the young teacher soon advanced to expounding the "sentences" of the scholastic writers and to unraveling the intricacies of their philosophic systems. To Luther "theology alone examined the kernel of the nut, the flour of the wheat, and the marrow of the bones," and by theology he meant the theology of the Bible. He always preferred to be called "Doctor of the Holy Scriptures," instead of "Doctor of Theology." Those Biblical books which were of the greatest importance in his own personal life—namely, the Psalms, Romans, and Galatians—were most frequently expounded by him in his lecture-room.

During the first few years his time was wholly occupied by his exegetical studies, especially since he had to apply himself to the study of the original languages. He had taken up the study of Hebrew before this, but had made little progress; Greek he did not even commence before he came to Wittenberg.

Next to the Bible he studied the writings of St. Augustine and of the Mystics. Among the latter he valued very highly Tauler's sermons and an anonymous book which he edited and called "Theologia Germanica." In Augustine he found a theological system which gave him the key to his own experience. He had learned that his salvation was not the reward for his own efforts, but was God's free gift, and it was Augustine who showed, as no other writer did, how futile are man's own efforts; that, in fact the natural man has no moral freedom, no moral strength.

In the Mystic writers he commended the idea of the necessity of personal union with God in Christ, but he avoided the snare of vague and vaporous pantheism into which many of them had fallen.

There was no lack of work. He was promoted to the position of a district vicar in his order, and had charge of eleven monasteries. Since 1514 he preached regularly; at first as the assistant of the aged pastor of the Stadt-Kirche; soon as the regularly appointed pastor. He preached in German, of course, but wrote all his sermons in Latin. The sermons on the Ten Commandments and on the Lord's Prayer were printed in German "for children and for common people," and they sold so fast that the first sheets had to be printed over again before the last ones had been issued from the press. From the very beginning Luther recognized the value of printer's ink, and also the importance of preaching and writing so plainly and popularly that the masses of the people could easily understand him. It stood him in good stead that he was a man of the people.

BOOK II

PULLING DOWN THE OLD

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHALLENGE.

It was on the thirty-first day of October, 1517, at noon, that Martin Luther, either in person or by some one else, posted his now famous Ninety-five Theses on the portals of the Castle Church in Wittenberg.

This day and the next following, known in the Church calendar as All-Saints' Day, were the gala days of Wittenberg. The anniversary of the Castle Church was celebrated, and the 5,005 holy relics which the Elector Frederick at great pains and expense had collected from all parts of the world were exhibited. Thousands of Frederick's devout subjects made the pilgrimage to the little city to view those sacred objects and to attend the services.

Those who could understand Latin might read on that day the following words written on a large piece of paper and nailed to the church door: "In the desire and with the purpose of elucidating the truth a disputation will be held on the underwritten propositions at Wittenberg under the presidency of the Reverend Father Martinus Luther, monk of the order of St. Augustine, Master of Arts and of Sacred Theology, and ordinary reader of the same at that place. He therefore asks those who can not be present and discuss the subjects with us orally,

to do so by letter in their absence. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

Then follow ninety-five propositions, or Theses, as the subjects for discussion. The words of some of them are:

"1. Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ in saying, 'Repent ye,' intended that the whole life of believers should be penitence.

"32. Those who believe that, through letters of pardon, they are made sure of their own salvation, will be eternally damned, together with their teachers.

"36. Every Christian who feels true compunction enjoys of right the remission of pain and guilt, even without letters of pardon.

"37. Every true Christian, whether living or dead, has a share in all the benefits of Christ and of the Church, given him by God, even without letters of pardon.

"62. The true treasure of the Church is the Holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God."

There was nothing revolutionary, not even anything extraordinary, in this act of Luther's. Public disputations among the professors were common occurrences in a university town; in fact, they were frequently in connection with Church or State celebrations. It was customary to post the Theses beforehand at some public place, or to print and circulate them. Luther's Theses, being written in Latin, were intended for scholars; the discussion was to be a university affair. He was far from intending to incite the common people against the Church or her doctrines.

To us who live at the beginning of the twentieth century those propositions which nearly four hundred years ago the monk of Wittenberg wished to discuss, do not seem to contain much that is remarkable. They do not attack the doctrines of the Church nor the system of Church government. They do not object to the indulgences *per se*. They firmly hold to the Catholic doctrines of purgatory, of the treasure of the Church, of the power of the keys.

In his Ninety-five Theses Luther simply propounds some questions with reference to the sale of indulgences as it was carried on at that time; he objects to gross abuses connected with the traffic, and invites discussion concerning those points that were not explicitly taught by the Church and on which theologians differed.

If anybody should have told the young professor that the nailing of his Theses should be considered, in later times, one of the great turning points in the history of the human race, the opening of a new era in the religious, social, and political development of mankind, Luther would have considered him a madman.

No one was more surprised at the reception the Theses met with, than was their author. The fact is that his words created a sensation as no others had done for centuries. Says Luther, "In a fortnight they flew all over Germany," "and," adds Myconius, his contemporary and earliest biographer, "in four weeks they had spread through Christendom as though angels were the postmen." They were translated into German and into other

European languages, were sold in Rome, and even in far-away Jerusalem some pilgrims saw copies of them.

"Ho, ho!" exclaimed an old ecclesiastic, "the man has come who will do the thing." "Now the time has come when darkness will be banished from our schools and churches," were the triumphant words of another. The old scholar, Reuchlin, harassed and persecuted by the monks, thanked God "that the monks have now found a man who will give them full employment, so that they will be glad to let me spend my old age in peace."

What induced Luther to propound those Theses, and how do we account for their unexpected, tremendous results?

In the world of commerce and of politics the secret of success lies in the clear conception of the ultimate end desired, in the mastery of all the details necessary to its accomplishment, and in the ability always to choose the best course under changed circumstances. But everything must be planned, matured beforehand, and the end must be kept constantly in view. The clear-headed, far-seeing, shrewd, calculating man who does not take the first step before he clearly sees what will be the second and the third and the tenth, is the successful leader.

The great moral revolutions and the great religious upliftings have been brought about in a different way. They were wrought by men who had the courage of their convictions, who dared to take the first step, because the need of the hour required it, even though they did not see the complications

and the final outcome. The leaders are men of strong convictions, of moral courage; men who know no fear; men who are willing to sacrifice their personal comforts, their plans for preferment, their reputation, yea, their lives, for the cause they champion, who, in short, do not seek their own, but the good of their fellow-men. Such a man was Martin Luther.

When he posted his Theses to the Castle Church at Wittenberg he had no preconceived plans. He saw a great moral and religious wrong, and he rose to fight it. In his fight he desired to remain within the bounds of the then existing laws. He did not see the consequences. He did not care. He saw his present duty, and he had the courage to do it.

The Roman Church had worked out a very elaborate doctrine of penance. Repentance as required in God's Word consists, according to Roman theology, of three parts: (1) Contrition of the heart; (2) Confession to the priest; (3) Satisfaction. When a man with contrite heart confesses his sins to the Church, his spiritual mother, she has the power to pronounce forgiveness and absolution, and she does so through her priests. But only the guilt and the eternal punishments are freely forgiven, not the temporal punishments. The latter are to be borne by the sinner. They consist in pilgrimages, prayers, fines, and other deeds of penance imposed by the Church; and since they can not be discharged fully in this life, the soul after death must pass through the cleansing process of purgatory.

The Church, however, is in a position to transmute, even to remit altogether, those punishments,

since she is in control of the treasure of the supermeritorious works of Christ and of all the saints. These remittals were called indulgences. By paying a certain sum of money, indulgence for hundreds, even thousands, of years of suffering in purgatory could be obtained, not only for the living but for the dead as well.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the sale of indulgences had developed greatly, and proved to be a source of increasing income to the Church. Pope Julius II and his successor, Leo X, were not slow to embrace this welcome opportunity to replenish their coffers. They were patrons of the Humanists, lovers of the arts. They needed immense sums of money to build and adorn the cathedral of St. Peter, then in process of construction, and also to keep up the splendor of their courts. So they organized the sale of indulgences and placed it on regular business principles.

A large part of Germany was assigned to Albrecht, Archbishop of Mainz. This prelate was a remarkable figure even in the sixteenth century. At the age of twenty-two he was the highest ecclesiastical dignitary of Germany, was elector, and one of the most powerful princes. He was, like the pope, an adherent of the new learning, a lover and protector of the fine arts, but withal a spendthrift whose sumptuous court could, in grandeur and splendor, vie with any papal or imperial court. His pallium—that is to say, the papal appointment to his position as archbishop—had cost him 30,000 florins, which amount he borrowed from the Fuggers, the rich bankers of Augsburg, and since his

expenses by far exceeded his income he was heavily indebted.

The pope and the archbishop went into partnership. The former was to receive one-half of the proceeds of the "holy negotium," Albrecht, or rather his creditors, the other half. The bargain being clinched, Albrecht secured the services of a Dominican monk by the name of John Tetzel. He was known as a popular speaker and a splendid collector, having had a good deal of experience in this business. There were current some ugly rumors affecting his moral character, but that did not matter. Tetzel knew his business, and to both the pope and the archbishop the sale of indulgences was a business matter pure and simple.

Now a most shameful traffic commenced. Tetzel was a master in the art, known to quacks in all times and places, of advertising and impressing the people. Weeks before he came to a city he requested the resident pastors to preach on the benefits of indulgences, and in order to facilitate matters he supplied them with sketches and sermons on the subject. When he arrived, the whole town was in a state of expectancy. He came as the special messenger of the Most Holy Father, bringing deliverance and salvation. The church bells rang, the clergy, the magistrates, the school-children met him outside the city walls with songs and burning tapers and flying colors. A large red cross, on which the papal arms were emblazoned, was carried at the head of the procession. Next came the papal bull of indulgence, exhibited on a velvet cushion. Then followed Tetzel and his companions on white horses,

clad in magnificent vestments. "The people could not have received God Himself with greater honors," says an old writer.

The procession marched through the principal streets and entered the largest church. The cross was placed in front of the high altar, the money-chest next to it. Then followed an enthusiastic sermon extolling the benefits of the grace to be purchased, and men, women, and children crowded up to the altar, and laid down their precious coins in exchange for the certificates of indulgence.

An agent of the Fuggers and a special envoy of the pope had charge of the money-chest. They counted the cash, and saw that no mistakes were made. Neither partner was quite willing to trust the other implicitly.

No street-vender or auctioneer could talk more glibly about the value of his goods than did John Tetzel. Forgiveness for any and every sin, either actually committed or only contemplated, could be purchased. The souls of the departed ones could be redeemed immediately. He knew how to picture in the most dreadful colors the torments of purgatory; he played upon the sympathy and the noble sentiments as well as upon the meaner feelings of his uncultured hearers.

> "So bald das Geld im Kasten klingt,
> Die Seel aus dem Fegfeuer in Himmel springt,"

was one of Tetzel's favorite sayings. ("As soon as the coin rattles in the chest, the soul ascends from purgatory to heaven.") He boasted that he had

redeemed more souls by his indulgences than St. Peter had by his preaching.

The subtle theological distinction between the eternal guilt of sin and the temporal punishment was not understood by the common people. The demand of contrition of heart and of absolution by the priest as necessary prerequisites to the commuting of the temporal or purgatory punishment was lost sight of completely. All that the people understood was, that if you paid the fixed price you could do what your heart desired and go straight to heaven. There was a regular scale of sins. Perjury cost nine ducats, adultery two, witchcraft two; greater offenses were rated correspondingly higher.

The vender in spiritual goods approached Wittenberg. It is true, Frederick did not allow him to ply his trade in his own country; not because he himself did not believe in the efficiency of indulgences, but simply for the reason that he hated to see his subjects carry their money away from home and pay the debts of his neighbor prince. But there was no law prohibiting the people to walk from twelve to fifteen miles and buy indulgences in Jüterbogk or Zerbst, just across the border.

Pious and well-meaning persons became greatly perturbed. Many of Luther's parishioners asked his advice. Confirmed sinners, persons of ill-repute, came to Luther when he preached against sin and vice, and complacently showing him their certificates of indulgence, demanded absolution. They did not intend to reform; they led a life of open sin as heretofore; but they had in their pockets the tickets to heaven, paid for and validated.

Luther was indignant. He knew from his personal experience that forgiveness of sins could not be obtained by a blameless life, much less by the mere payment of money without an inward change. His study of the Greek New Testament, which he had begun just recently, convinced him that "metanoia," the Greek word for repentance, was something altogether different from the "pœnitentia" of his Latin Bible and its definition as given by the scholastic theologians. It meant a change of heart, not the mere performance of outward works.

The theologians differed with reference to many details of the doctrine of indulgence,—Luther himself had no clear conception of the Bible teaching, but whatever the Bible or the Church might teach, it certainly was not, could not be the teaching of Tetzel and his associates. There was an urgent need to stop the mischievous abuses and reach clear and sound conclusions. Luther the preacher raised his voice in the pulpit, and preached several strong sermons against the nuisance. Luther the monk and the professor knew of only one way to focus the thought of the theologians on this point, and that was an invitation to a public disputation. Hence the Theses.

Crude as they may appear to us, they contain the germs of genuine evangelical doctrines, which, if left to expand, must finally outgrow and overthrow the whole papal system. But what accounts more for the sensation caused by them is the fact that they protested against the financial schemes and the high-handed robbery of the Italian pope and his retinue. There was in Germany a strong undercur-

rent of intense opposition against foreign influence. Patriotic Germans were filled with rage when they thought of the streams of gold flowing into the pockets of the hated Italians, who looked down upon the Germans as upon half barbarians at best. Luther struck in his Theses a chord which vibrated in the soul of every true German, whatever his religious sentiments might be. Although it was unintentional, he appealed strongly to the national feeling of his countrymen. He dared to say openly what many felt without even daring to think it.

"And since all bishops and doctors kept silence, and no one dared to tie the bells to the cat's tail because the Dominican heresy-hunters had frightened everybody with the threat of fire, they were glad that finally some one came and tackled the matter," reports Luther, with dry humor.

CHAPTER VII.

ATTEMPTS TO SILENCE THE MONK.

"O, some drunken German has written them; as soon as he is sober again he will speak differently," was Pope Leo's remark when his attention was called to the Theses of the Wittenberg monk.

The monk, in a short time, did speak differently; not, however, humbly begging pardon for his rash utterances, as was expected, but speaking more boldly, and denouncing unsparingly the unevangelical doctrines and practices which the papacy had been using as a chain to hold the nations in bondage.

At first the outlook was not very promising. It is true the Theses created a tremendous sensation, but they were not received favorably in all quarters. On the contrary, they immediately called forth virulent attacks. Many well-meaning people trembled for their author. "You speak the truth, good brother, but you will not accomplish anything. You had better go to your cell and say, 'Lord have mercy upon me!'" said an old prior in Hamburg, and these words expressed the opinion of all who knew the spirit and the power of Rome.

Various and numerous were Luther's opponents. Tetzel, whose cash receipts fell off perceptibly, was infuriated, and thundered against him. He was backed by the whole order of Dominicans, who bore

an old grudge against the Augustinians, and, as it were, jumped at the opportunity to denounce from their pulpits the heresy of their Augustinian confrater. Older universities looked enviously upon their new rival, and were not slow to insinuate that, at Wittenberg, unorthodox and destructive doctrines were taught. Professor Wimpina, of Frankfort, and Professor Eck, of Ingolstadt, wrote pamphlets. The University of Frankfort gave the Doctor's degree to Tetzel, and three hundred Dominican monks from all parts of Germany assembled in honor of the distinguished member of their order, and arranged a grand disputation, over which Dr. Tetzel presided. It was an open demonstration against Luther, the Augustinians, and the University of Wittenberg.

Luther's old teachers, the venerable Dr. Jodocus Truttvetter and Dr. Usinger, of Erfurt, who had taken offense at his contempt for scholastic theology, deplored the arrogance of the young man. The adherents of the fossilized school of thought lost no time in pointing out how dangerous it was to leave the safe old paths. Luther's colleagues were reluctant. The rector of the university and the prior of the convent begged him not to bring their school and order into disrepute. His bishop commanded him to remain silent for the sake of the peace of the Church.

What would the Elector, the founder and head of the university, do? And the pope? From more than one pulpit it was intimated, and in more than one lecture-room it was publicly announced, that the insolent monk would soon be burned just as only

about twenty years before Savonarola in Italy had been punished for his audacity.

What did Luther do?

He did not seek notoriety. He shrank from it. He simply wanted to do his duty. But when the conflict came, he did not flinch. He faced his enemies, and, instead of being intimidated and cowed into submission, he grew stronger and more fearless. "They will not stand it," said Luther's friend, the lawyer Schurf. "Suppose they have to stand it," retorted the courageous monk.

Suppose they have to stand it! Not by force of arms or political influence, but because truth is mightier than error. "Whatever I do, I wish to do, not according to man's pleasure, but according to God's will. If the work be not begun in His name, it will soon come to nought; if it is begun in His name, let Him have His own way."

He felt grieved that his former teachers and friends accused him of conceit, but "adherents of the old will always suspect conceit in every one who dares to propose something new. They can not expect that I ask for their advice and wait for their conclusions before I act," he wrote to a friend.

For the present he was mindful of the bishop's injunction, and remained quiet. With the greatest diligence and thoroughness he investigated anew the whole question of indulgences and Church government, and prepared an elaborate explanation of his Theses.

The spring of 1518 came, and matters began to look a little more encouraging. The Elector showed his good will by granting Luther his protection on

a journey to Heidelberg, where a general convention of the Augustinians was to be held. His order indorsed him by inviting him to preside over a disputation in which his theological views were clearly set forth. The University of Wittenberg, after wavering for a time, rallied around him, some of the professors openly avowing his principles. When Tetzel sent a box of his Counter-theses to Wittenberg the students seized it, erected a stake, and burned every last copy.

At last Rome was heard from. In the beginning of August Luther received the summons to appear in Rome within sixty days, and answer the charge of heresy.

The "drunken German" had not become sober, and it became necessary for the pope to take some action. Urged by his advisers, Leo instructed the general of the Augustinians "to pacify that fellow." Monsigniore Prierias, a Dominican of righ rank, "forsook the study of the divine teacher [meaning Thomas of Aquino] for three days," as he says in his Preface, to squelch the German barbarian. His pamphlet was a miserably weak production. Luther showed his contempt by publishing the pamphlet together with his answer, stating in the Preface that it took him only two days to reply to the Italian. He also had the audacity to publish a "Sermon on the Church," in which he asserted that by excommunication a Christian can be separated from the visible Church, not from the communion of the true Church of God and of His saints; and finally he issued his "Resolutions," a thorough explanation and amplification of his Theses. They were couched

in most modest language; the words of the dedicatory epistle are as submissive as anything he had ever penned before. He writes to the pope: "Quicken, kill, call, recall, approve, reprove, as you please; I will acknowledge your voice as that of Christ, presiding and speaking in you." These words were by no means sarcastic; they were an honest expression of his conviction at that time.

But in spite of this, the pamphlet shows a decided advance over his former views. The assiduous study of the Greek New Testament during the winter months had borne its fruit. His conceptions were more mature. He is also fully aware that the publication of this tract may lead to serious complications, but his closing words prove that he is ready to stand by his convictions.

To go to Rome meant certain death. Luther knew this very well. He therefore petitioned the Elector to request in his behalf that the trial be held in Germany. An intimate friend and former fellow-student of Luther, George Spalatin, who had become the confidential secretary of Elector Frederick, was, until the death of the Elector, the faithful intermediator between the Reformer and the Saxon court. By his faithfulness, stanch honesty, prudence, and tact, Spalatin had a firm hold on Frederick. It is due to a great extent to the services of his secretary that the Elector kept his protecting hand over the Wittenberg professor, whom he never in his life met in person. Another element enters here into the course of Martin Luther's life, to which he more than once owed at least temporary safety, namely, the political situation of Europe.

The pope had every reason to retain the good will of the powerful Elector and his friends. The German Diet was in session at Augsburg, and the pope, through his legate, Cardinal Thomas Vio de Gaeta, commonly called Cajetan, endeavored to enforce the payment of a heavy tax levied upon all Christian countries by the Lateran Council for another Crusade against the Turks. Quite a number of German princes objected to this demand. They declared that, in their opinion, the most dangerous Turks were, just then, to be found in Italy, and that the money was really wanted for adorning Rome with more magnificent buildings.

Again, the pope desired to have the last traces of the Bohemian heresy eradicated, and he needed the co-operation of the princes to accomplish this end. And last, but not least, Emperor Maximilian was an old man whose death might be expected almost any time. Rome was intensely interested in the question who should be the next emperor, and it was well understood that Frederick controlled the majority of votes in the coming Electoral Council. For all these reasons it would have been imprudent in the highest degree for Rome to ignore the wishes of the Elector of Saxony.

Emperor Maximilian was a political schemer. He had no appreciation of the religious questions involved, but he considered Luther a valuable tool to harass the pope and make him more pliant. "How is your monk?" he inquired of Frederick's private counselor. "Tell your master to take good care of him; perchance we may need him at some future time."

The outcome of the negotiations between the Elector and the pope was that Luther, "inasmuch as he by reason of his bodily infirmity is not able to undertake the wearisome journey to Rome," was granted a hearing before the papal legate at Augsburg.

From all sections of Germany there came warnings to Luther not to go to Augsburg. He was informed of plots to murder him on the way or to poison him in Augsburg. Cajetan, it was averred, had instructions to take and hold him captive if he did not revoke. These rumors were not purely at random. It was not known then, but it has come to light since, that the legate was really in possession of secret instructions to arrest "the son of wickedness" and his adherents and send them to Rome under strong guard; furthermore to threaten with severe punishments "every one who should dare to house or shield or in any way, either openly or privately, protect or assist or counsel said Martin Luther."

The monk obeyed the command of the head of the Church. He proceeded to Augsburg. It was not a joyful journey. Before his eyes was the stake. "Now I must die," he said repeatedly, and exclaimed, "O the disgrace that I heap upon my poor parents!" In Nürnberg his friend Link loaned him a more respectable hood, and accompanied him. The nearer he came to the city where his fate was to be decided, the firmer he grew. "I am firm," he writes. "The Lord's will be done. Even in Augsburg, in the midst of his enemies, Christ reigns. May Christ live and Martinus die!"

When he reached his destination, in the month of October, the Diet had adjourned. Most of the princes, among them Frederick, had left; the emperor was absent on a hunting trip. Luther was urged not to appear before Cajetan unless he was in possession of a promise of safe conduct from the emperor. Several days elapsed before he received it, and then, on October 12th, he met the prelate.

Following the custom he prostrated himself; then at the first sign of recognition he kneeled, remaining upon his knees until the cardinal bade him to rise. Luther begged forgiveness if he had taught or done anything that was wrong. Cajetan was kindness itself. He did not intend to dispute; he was far from punishing. There were only three things which the pope demanded of his son the monk. In the first place he should revoke his errors; secondly, he should promise never to teach them again; and thirdly, he was in the future to refrain from anything that might disturb the peace of the Church.

Being asked to show him his errors, Cajetan singled out two Theses. Luther went into a discussion, which the cardinal impatiently closed with the words: "You must revoke to-day, whether you want to or not, or I shall condemn all your Theses."

There were two more meetings. Luther handed in his explanation in writing, but the last word of the legate remained invariably, "Revoke." Finally, losing all patience, he cried: "Go away! Revoke, or do not come again before my eyes." To Staupitz and Link, who had a private interview with him he

remarked: "I do not want to have another talk with that beast. He has deep eyes and strange speculations in his head."

During the next few days Luther wrote out an appeal "from the poorly informed pope to the pope better to be informed," which he filed with a notary public and also nailed to the door of the cathedral of Augsburg. He moreover addressed several letters to the legate. No answer came to him. His friends became alarmed, fearing secret plots on the part of the wily Italian. In the dead of night a small gate in the city wall was opened, and the monk escaped. On October 31st, exactly one year after the posting of the Theses, he reached Wittenberg in safety.

Cajetan demanded from the Elector that Luther should be sent to Rome a prisoner, or at least be banished from his home country. Luther declared himself willing to relieve his prince of all further responsibility. He seems to have thought of going to Paris. But Frederick refused to comply. He insisted on a fair trial before impartial judges.

Everybody was looking now for the bull of excommunication. Luther himself prepared for the worst by posting an appeal to a General Council. But Rome hesitated. The agitation in Germany was too widely spread to allow of summary proceedings. It was decided to make one more attempt to silence "the German beast;" this time in a different way.

The Elector Frederick was given the much coveted "Golden Rose," the highest honor which the pope could bestow; Archbishop Albrecht was created a cardinal, and a distinguished Saxon noble-

man, Karl von Miltitz, who had lived in Rome for many years—a man of the world, highly cultured, liberal, and withal of charming manners—was sent as papal envoy. On his journey he noticed, to his dismay, that the commotion was much more serious than was surmised in Rome. "Of every five persons, hardly two are on the pope's side," he reported.

In January, 1519, he met Luther at Altenburg. "Well, you are much younger than I thought you were," exclaimed Miltitz, surprised. "I was under the impression that you were a venerable old man." He agreed that a German bishop should try the case, he admitted that Tetzel had given just cause for offense, but affirmed that the offensive features of the sale of indulgences had been suspended, and that Tetzel himself was silenced. This was true. The notorious vender of indulgences lived in ignominious retirement in Leipzig. His ecclesiastical superiors had cast him off when the storm began, blaming him for everything that they themselves had sanctioned, or at least winked at.

The outcome of the conference with Miltitz was the agreement that both Luther and his opponents were to refrain from further discussions. The matter should be allowed quietly to "bleed to death." Luther was to write a letter to the pope, protesting that he did not intend to do or say anything against the Church, but that his only object was to lay bare abuses which he considered harmful to the best interests of the Church. He was to ask pardon if he had used expressions too harsh or bitter. And finally Luther agreed to write a "sheet" for the people, admonishing them to be faithful to the Church

and to consider his writings, not as polemical against the Church, but as defending and honoring her.

Miltitz was overjoyed at what seemed to be an amicable settlement of the difficulty. He kissed Luther, and sent a glorious report to Rome. Where the cardinal had failed, he had succeeded. Pope Leo wrote a conciliatory letter to Luther, in which he called him his "beloved son," while only a short time before he had styled him a "child of perdition," "a son of the devil." He expressed his satisfaction that Luther had revoked his errors, and invited him to come to Rome in order to recant publicly before the Holy Father himself.

The letter was sent in care of Miltitz; but the diplomatic envoy deemed it wise not to deliver it, not even to make Luther acquainted with its contents. He knew the reason why.

Was the monk silenced? Was the whole matter really ended?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BREACH WIDENS.

During those trying months, full of excitement and necessitating incessant studies, Luther did not relax in his work for the university. The fame of Wittenberg now attracted hundreds of students from all parts of Germany. In 1505 there were only 127 students in attendance; in 1517 the number had risen to 233, and in 1520 not less than 579 students were matriculated. Dr. Luther, of course, was the greatest drawing card. His lecture-room was always crowded. But there were other strong men in this little university town "at the border of civilization." There was, for instance, Nicolaus von Amsdorf, cautious, conservative, an excellent scholar and faithful to his younger colleague. Then there was Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, enthusiastic, impetuous, but injudicious and easily unbalanced. In 1518, Philip Melanchthon became a member of the faculty, a youth hardly twenty-one years of age, timid, not prepossessing in appearance, of frail constitution, but a veritable prodigy in learning. His uncle, the learned Reuchlin, had recommended him to the Elector, and as soon as he had delivered his inaugural lecture the university rang with his praises.

Melanchthon's name stands out most conspicu-

ously, next to that of Luther, in the whole history of the Reformation. Luther was the great Reformer and leader, Melanchthon the "teacher of Germany." The two men formed a strong and lasting friendship. Different though they were in almost every way, they supplemented each other most admirably.

Luther realized the difference in their dispositions. He writes: "I prefer the books of Magister Philippus to my own. I am rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike. I am born to fight against innumerable monsters and devils. I must remove stumps and stones, cut away thistles and thorns, and clear the wild forests. But Magister Philippus comes along softly and gently, sowing and watering with joy according to the gifts which God has abundantly bestowed upon him."

The older man's appreciation of his younger friend and colleague was never disturbed by the slightest feeling of envy. He fully and frankly acknowledged Melanchthon's superiority in many points, and thanked God for giving him a coworker and friend who so perfectly supplied his own deficiencies.

Besides his polemical writings, Luther published in the year 1519 his Commentary on Galatians and an exposition of the first five Psalms. Seeing the need of having a printing establishment in Wittenberg, he persuaded a printer from Leipzig, Melchior Lotter, to establish in Wittenberg a "printing-press in three languages." Aside from his university work he continued to preach regularly.

Luther had promised that he would remain si-

lent on the questions which had created the commotion, on the condition that his opponents would refrain from attacking him, and he meant to keep his word. The blame, if such it is, for carrying on the open discussion rests on his opponent, Professor Eck, of Ingolstadt, and on his own friend and colleague, Karlstadt.

The latter had issued Theses against Eck's pamphlet before Luther had gone to Augsburg. Eck retorted, and challenged the Wittenberg professor to a public disputation. After some preliminaries, Leipzig was agreed upon as the place where the disputation was to be held. When Eck's Theses, which were to be the basis for the disputation, appeared in print, it was evident that, although claiming to dispute with Karlstadt, he in reality attacked Luther. Luther protested in an open letter, and published Theses in refutation of Eck. He wrote to the Elector explaining to him that the attack of the professor from the University of Ingolstadt was directed, not merely against him personally, but rather against the University of Wittenberg. "The honor of the university is at stake. It is not fair to muzzle me and allow every one else to speak freely." Eck confessed that he challenged Karlstadt, but that he really meant Luther, and now extended him a formal invitation to take part in the disputation.

It was perfectly clear to Luther, from the nature of the Theses set up for discussion, that his previous attacks upon Roman abuses had been but child's play; now the serious part was to begin. Following the method of Cajetan, Eck tried to draw

the doctrines of the Church and the papacy into the discussion. His last and most important Thesis, directed against a previous assertion of Luther, read: "We deny the assertion that the Roman Church was not superior to the other Churches before the time of Pope Sylvester; but we acknowledge him who holds the see and the faith of St. Peter as the perpetual successor of St. Peter and the general vicar of Christ." Luther's Counter-thesis was: "That the Roman Church is superior to all others is proved from the most silly decrees of the Roman pontiffs who have been born within the last four hundred years; against this assertion is the approved history of fifteen hundred years, the text of the Holy Scripture, the decree of the Council of Nice, the most holy of all Councils."

The direct results of the disputation were unsatisfactory. The great and lasting gain was the clearing away of uncertainties and the giving up of untenable positions. The preparatory studies which carried Luther deep into the history of the papacy and the papal decretals led him at last to a complete breaking away from papal supremacy. The breach between him and the Church became wide and deep, and the disputation at Leipzig served to mark this new position unmistakably.

He was now, in consequence of his studies, convinced that only by means of the grossest prevarications and most palpable frauds the popes had succeeded in obtaining their supremacy, that the supreme authority of the Bishop of Rome over all other bishops could not be proven by Scripture, nor by the Church Fathers, nor by the Council of Nice;

that it was not established until about four hundred years before his own time.

In a letter to his friend Lange, a few weeks later, he remarks that he has no hopes of convincing Eck, but the disputation would give him an opportunity "to disclose the fallacies of the foolish and wicked bulls of which Christians have been needlessly afraid. They are full of lies, although they are issued in the name of the Roman Church."

The disputation itself was held with all the pompous dignity accompanying a great university function.

Dr. Eck, shrewd and knowing how to create a favorable impression, arrived some days before the beginning. He took up quarters with the burgomaster, read mass in church, took a prominent part in a procession, called on the professors, and took pains to make himself seen and heard. His opponents arrived on the day before the date agreed upon. Karlstadt occupied the first carriage. He was in form, and considered himself in fact the principal, since his name was the only one mentioned in Prince George's letter of safe conduct, Luther being included among the "companions and assistants." Two hundred students from Wittenberg, clad in their picturesque costumes, armed with spears and halberds, escorted their professors. The streets of Leipzig were filled with curious citizens and visitors.

On June 27th the formal opening of the great event was celebrated by long and elaborate services in the largest church of the city, and by an address of welcome by the rector of the university. The

faculty of the University of Leipzig, the ducal court, the invited guests and other visitors, fell in line and marched in procession towards the Pleissenburg, Duke George's Leipzig castle, where an honorary guard of citizens in full uniform and arms received them with beating drums and flying colors.

The duke had set apart his large reception hall for the disputation. Two desks had been placed opposite each other for the use of the contestants. One end of the hall was reserved for the duke and his court; the other was filled with benches for the guests. Another long address on the art of disputing was delivered by one of the Leipzig professors, the conditions of the disputation were signed, a hymn was sung, and then the meeting adjourned for dinner.

For a whole week Drs. Eck and Karlstadt disputed on the freedom of the will. It was a wearysome waste of words. Karlstadt was embarrassed from the beginning. His manner was uncouth, his voice husky. Not trusting his memory, he read citation after citation from the bulky volumes which his assistants carried to his desk. Eck appeared perfectly at ease. He was prepossessing and well versed in the art of playing to the gallery. He had a ready command of language, a well-stored memory, and a quick wit. Without the help of notes, and without any apparent effort, he quoted from the Church Fathers, the bulls, and the decretals. Very often his quotations were purely invented, made up for the moment, or their sense was twisted; but they served their purpose. Unreliable and superficial though he was, the awkward Wittenberg

professor proved no match for him. Thus the days dragged on; the audience grew restless or went to sleep. Several of the learned Doctors, who were in duty bound to attend all the sessions, were in the habit of sleeping peacefully, and had to be awakened at the hour of adjournment.

At last, on Monday, July 4th, Luther ascended the desk. During his stay he had been shown scant courtesies. While Eck was invited and feasted, Luther was left to himself. Once or twice the duke asked him to dine in the castle, to save appearances. When the Duke of Pomerania, who was an interested visitor, requested Luther to preach, he found every church in Leipzig closed to him except the castle chapel, and, this being too small, he had to preach in the disputation hall, an unconsecrated place. Dr. Eck preached in every church by special invitation. One day, when Luther entered a church, the Dominican monks, who were reading mass, hurriedly took the holy vessels away lest they be defiled by the presence of the heretic.

But on that Monday the disputation hall which had looked quite empty for the last few days was crowded to its utmost capacity.

We have a full description of Luther by Peter Mosellanus, one of the most renowned Latinists of the day. "He is of middle stature," so Mosellanus writes; "his body thin and so wasted by care and study that nearly all his bones may be counted. He is in the prime of life. His voice is clear and melodious. His learning and his knowledge of the Scriptures are so extraordinary that he has nearly everything at his finger's ends. Greek and Hebrew

he understands sufficiently well to give his judgment on interpretations. For conversation he has a rich store of subjects at his command; a vast forest of thoughts and words is at his disposal. He is polite and clever. There is nothing stoical, nothing supercilious about him, and he understands how to adapt himself to different persons and surroundings. He is always lively, cheerful, and at his ease, and has a pleasant countenance, however hard his enemies may threaten him, so that one can not but believe that Heaven is with him in his great undertaking."

Not everybody thought so favorably of Luther. When he was seen stepping up to the desk with a bouquet of flowers in his hands, which he frequently held up to his face, some imagined that diabolical powers were hidden in the odor of the flowers, and a silver ring worn by him on one of his fingers was thought to be the temporary abode of his Satanic Majesty himself.

For five full days Eck and Luther discussed the important question of the thirteenth Thesis; viz., the supremacy of the pope and the Roman Church. Luther admitted that it was necessary for the Church to have a head, but claimed that this head was Christ. He recognized the pope as the head of the visible Church, but denied that he was such by virtue of Divine appointment. The pope attained his position as supreme head in the course of the human history of the Church, but the Church can exist independent of the pope or his cardinals.

Eck was not slow to draw the logical inferences of this assertion. If it be correct, then adherence to the Roman Church was not necessary to salva-

tion. "Quite true," admitted Luther. But this doctrine was "Bohemian poison." The Council of Constance, which had condemned John Huss, had positively affirmed the Divine origin of the papacy.

"I beg the pardon of the venerable Father," said Eck, with blandest courtesy; "I beg pardon, if I seem severe towards the Bohemians as enemies of the Church, and if in the present disputation I am reminded of them; but the declarations of the venerable Father—namely, that the primacy of the Roman Church is established by human law—in my insignificant judgment, favors very much their errors."

And now Luther said what proved to be the most decisive and far-reaching words of the whole disputation: "It is certain that among the articles of John Huss there are some genuinely Christian and evangelical; as, for instance, the article that there is but one universal Church. It does not matter whether Huss or Wiclif has taught this truth. It can not be condemned. No Christian can be compelled to hold any doctrine which is not contained in Holy Scriptures."

"The plague on it!" exclaimed Duke George, indignantly. The whole audience was thunderstruck; Luther's opponents laughed in their sleeves; his friends looked alarmed.

To appreciate the boldness of Luther's assertion then and there, we must keep in mind that the University of Leipzig was founded for the express purpose to counteract the Bohemian heresies; that the Bohemians had once and again carried war and destruction into the Saxon lands; that in the au-

dience there were not a few whose fathers had fallen in the wars against the Hussites, whose childhood homes had been sacked and burned. To have defended Saxony against the Bohemians was the glory of the Saxon nobility. Those noblemen did, of course, not know what John Huss had actually taught, but to all of them he was the very arch-enemy of the Church and of Christianity. And this monk had the impudence to affirm in their presence that some of his doctrines were good and evangelical!

Eck saw his advantage at once.

"But now, Reverend Father, the cursed Hussites will say, If the Council has erred in condemning some points, it may have erred in others likewise. Its authority is not valid. Who shall decide what is heresy if not a Council?"

Luther's final answer was short and clear. Only the Bible is infallible. Councils may err, and have erred.

"Reverend Father," was Eck's courteous but cold and triumphant reply, "if you hold that a lawful Council representing the Holy Catholic Church can err, I must consider you a heathen and a publican."

This was the climax of the disputation. The remainder was comparatively of little interest. The squabble which followed as to who was the victor, is of no importance to us. The great gain for Luther was that he had completely broken away from Rome by refusing to acknowledge any human authority whatever. This marks the beginning of a new period in his theological development.

From the monk who sold the indulgences he had appealed to the scholars and the bishops; from the bishops and the cardinal to the pope himself; from the pope to a General Council; and now he appeals from the Council to the Bible. He recognizes as court of final appeal no ecclesiastical authority, no human voice, nothing but the Word of God.

CHAPTER IX.

LUTHER'S APPEAL TO THE NATION.

During the month of June in the year 1520 two very important documents were being written. Beyond the Alps, in the Holy City, Roman politicians and theologians were forging the weapon which was to cut to the quick and annihilate the rebellious monk; they were framing the bull of excommunication; and in his cell in the Wittenberg cloister that same monk, with his heart aflame, his zeal aglow, his indignation at fever-heat, was preparing the fuse and applied the spark that set a whole nation afire: Martin Luther was composing his famous "Address to the German Nobility."

With this treatise he entered upon the wider field of social and national reform. He compelled the proud scholars and the haughty knights who, like Ulrich von Hutten, looked upon the whole affair as "a quarrel between hotheaded monks who are shouting and screaming at each other," and wished that "they would devour each other," to listen to his stirring appeal. He became the mouthpiece, the prophet of all those who were sighing under the yoke of foreign tyranny and yearning for national and social liberty.

Luther did not shift his position. His motives were from the beginning purely religious, and they

remained the same to the end of his life. His struggle with Rome grew out of his personal experience. But the deeper he penetrated the questions involved, the clearer he perceived that Rome ruled, not only over the beliefs of the Church and over the consciences of the believers, but that she also had an iron grip on the whole political and social life of the nation. Rome was not merely a Church, Rome was a world power. When the Wittenberg monk published his Ninety-five Theses they were greeted by many as a cry for freedom.

Luther appealed to the patriotism of the German nobility, not because he was afraid that mere religious opposition was lacking in strength, but because he saw very clearly that true religion and true patriotism are inseparably connected. He who wants to be right with God, must likewise be right with the best and highest duties of his nation. A man's religion must permeate his social and political aspirations, and must constrain him to do his utmost for the betterment and uplifting of his people. The religious life in its origin is individualistic, in its effects it touches the social relations of man. Mere national or philanthropic movements which lack the inspiration of religious motives may be effervescent, but they are transitory. Coupled with soul-stirring religious convictions they are productive of lasting results.

Broadly speaking, there were three currents of opposition against Rome.

The Hussite or Taborite movement had long before spent its force as a religious reformation, but its social ideas and aspirations were still spreading

among the common people. The closing decades of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries witnessed a number of social revolts which occurred in various parts of Europe, and most of which can be traced back to Bohemian influences. There were among the peasants bitter complaints of their misery and degradation, on which every day the light of the sun was shining, and which every night was covered by the darkness, but of which no end could be seen. The Hussites and all who were influenced by them were heretics religiously and revolutionists socially; Rome persecuted them, and they in turn secretly opposed Rome.

Among the opponents of Rome, to a certain degree at least, must be counted also the Humanists. Some of them were wealthy patricians, as, for instance, Willibald Pirkheimer, Lazarus Spengler, and others; some were poor scholars living in humble circumstances, often erratic, even immoral, but all of them fighting Roman superstition and bigotry with the weapons of satire and cold though polite contempt, borrowed from the great classic satirists of the later Latin period.

Luther was not impressed with their methods nor with their spirit. They disclosed the many defects without mercy, they poured out the vials of scorn and satire, but they offered no remedies. "He is very capable of exposing error, but he knows not how to teach truth," said Luther of one of them. The tenor of their writings was light. They really wrote mainly for their own amusement and in order to vex the ecclesiastics, but they lacked moral earnestness. They were not imbued with the spirit of

compassion for the deluded people and the desire to lift them up. Luther was personally acquainted with some of the leaders of this class of writers. He had freely associated with them in his Erfurt days. But when the "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum" appeared, the greatest satire of the age, in which the follies, ignorance, stupidity, and depravity of the monks were held up to ridicule, he was grieved. He himself could made use of satire as few of his contemporaries, but he always had an ulterior end in view. He never used satire simply in order to make people laugh.

The older Humanists, like Reuchlin and Erasmus, served above all the cause of learning. In the school of bitter experience they had learned to be cautious. They anxiously calculated the results which each step might have upon their standing and reputation. They were glad if the Church left them undisturbed. The greater the agitation became which Luther's writings created, the more anxious they were to keep aloof from him lest their cause might be identified with his and be swept away in the storm which threatened to break forth. Said Erasmus with reference to the Reformer: "Those who bring the sea into new beds, often attempt a work that disappoints their expectations; for the terrible element, once let in, does not go where they would wish it, but whithersoever it pleases, and is apt to cause utter devastation." Thus while not directly opposing Luther, they did not lend him their unqualified assistance. They represented that class of timid scholars who live for their learned

studies; Luther was the man of action, of resolution and of courage.

The younger Humanists welcomed the bold monk as a co-worker. The more serious wing of their army, represented by Melanchthon, was influenced by Luther's moral and religious earnestness; even the more frivolous could not but perceive the force of his position.

It was among the knights that this longing for freedom from Rome found its strongest expression. There were numerous causes for dissatisfaction. The knights noticed with misgivings the growing wealth of convents and ecclesiastical orders. The property held by the Church being exempt from taxes, their own possessions became overburdened. Moreover, the rapid development of commerce was detrimental to their interests; the changes in the mode of warfare had lessened the importance of their own order; they were indignant over the schemes by which Rome endeavored to accomplish the election of King Francis of France as German emperor; they saw that the political tendencies of Roman hierarchy were anything but favorable to the development of Germany. These men felt most keenly the humiliating position the German nation was forced to occupy. Selfish and patriotic motives, apprehension of the precariousness of their private estates and positions, and dissatisfaction with the political situation, combined to make them restless, and they attributed all their troubles to the foreign rulers of the Church.

They were not interested in theological questions, but were ever ready to strike a blow with their

arms. Under the leadership of the valiant Franz von Sickingen and the versatile scholar and knight, Ulrich von Hutten, they formed a political party of no mean importance. Even princes and high ecclesiastical dignitaries favored any movement that tended toward independence from Rome. It appears that no less a personage than Albrecht of Mainz was, at first, not adverse to Hutten and Luther. He kept the former at his court, and did not molest the latter, hoping, perhaps, for the establishment of an independent national Church, of which he expected to be the head.

Those various currents finally met. Social reformers, Humanists, and knights were influenced by Luther's religious fervor; Luther was moved by the patriotism, especially of the knights. The monk discovered a new world outside of the cloister walls. The line of demarcation which the Church had drawn between things spiritual and things temporal was growing faint, and finally disappeared altogether.

The leaders of the nobility offered Luther their protection. Sickingen invited him to his castle as a place of safety. They were ready at a moment's notice to take up arms. Luther was pleased, but he remained cool. "I do not despise their protection, but I shall rely on Christ and on Him alone. . . . I would not have the Gospel defended by violence and murder," he writes.

In August, 1520, the "Address to the German Nobility" appeared. It was an unsparing arraignment of the Roman abuses and a ringing appeal to the nobility of the German nation to take in hand

the Reformation of Christianity since the clergy had become unmindful of its duty.

"The time for silence is passed, the time for speaking has come," he commences. "The popes have built three strong walls which are obstacles to any true Reformation. In the first place, if you mention temporal power, they claim that temporal power has no authority over them, since spiritual power is higher than temporal power; secondly, if you refer to the Scriptures, they answer that no one can by right interpret the Scriptures save the pope; and in the third instance, if you mention a General Council, they feign that the pope has the sole right to call a General Council. Now, may God help us and give us one of the trumpets with which the walls of Jericho were overthrown, so that we can blow down these walls of straw and paper."

In the first part of this treatise, which the historian Ranke calls "a few sheets of world historical contents preparing and prophesying future developments," he lays the theological foundation by elaborating the fundamental thought of the universal priesthood of believers. Then he enters upon a discussion of the most flagrant national defects and their cures. He maintains that the secular government not only is independent of the ecclesiastical, but has jurisdiction also over the ecclesiastical members of the community. The idea of a separation of Church and State is altogether foreign to Luther, as we shall see later on; but he strongly refutes the superiority of the ecclesiastical power, and demands a German national government independent of a foreign power.

Here are some of his notable passages:

"There is no difference among Christians save of office alone. We all are Christians by a higher consecration than pope or bishop can give. The bishop's consecration is just as if, in the name of the whole congregation, he took one member out of the community, each member of which has equal power, and commanded him to exercise this power for the rest; in the same way as if ten brothers, co-heirs as king's sons, were to choose one from among them to rule over their inheritance; they would all of them still remain kings and have equal power although one is ordered to govern. If a little company of Christian laymen were taken prisoners and carried away to a desert, and had not among them a priest consecrated by a bishop, and were there to agree to elect one of them, married or unmarried, and were to order him to baptize, to celebrate the mass, to absolve, and to preach, this man would be as truly a priest as if all the bishops and all the popes had consecrated him. A priest, therefore, should be nothing in Christendom but an official; as long as he holds his office he has precedence over others; if he be deprived of it, he is a peasant and citizen like the rest. A cobbler, a smith, a peasant, every man has the office and function of his calling, and yet all alike are consecrated priests and bishops, and every man in his work must be useful and beneficial to the rest."

"To say that the temporal authority, being inferior to the clergy, dare not punish them, is as though one were to say, the hand may not help when the eye is suffering. Inasmuch as the tem-

poral power has been ordained of God for the punishment of the bad and the protection of the good, we must let it do its duty throughout the whole Christian body without respect of persons, whether it strike popes, bishops, priests, or nuns. If a priest is killed, the country is laid under an interdict. Why not, also, if a peasant is killed?"

"They must acknowledge that there are pious Christians among us, that have the true faith, spirit, understanding, and mind of Christ; why, then, should we reject their word and understanding, and follow a pope who has neither understanding nor spirit? Balaam's ass was wiser than the prophet. If God spake by an ass against a prophet, why should He not speak by a pious man against the pope?"

In a few days four thousand copies of the pamphlet were sold, something unheard of in those times. It was printed again in Wittenberg, and also in Strassburg and Leipzig.

Within a few weeks it was followed by his treatise on the "Babylonian Captivity of the Church." Being intended for theologians it was written in Latin, but was immediately translated and also widely circulated. This pamphlet was the severest blow which Luther had yet dealt against all pretensions of the Roman Church. It stands without parallel in the whole history, and is really the boldest step which the Reformer had taken up to this time. In cold blood he made up his mind not only to assail flagrant wrongs and open abuses, but to overthrow the very foundations of a world power.

He opens in an ironical tone, confessing his obligation to his opponents for compelling him to study the history of the papacy more thoroughly and to see the present needs of the Church more clearly. While formerly he considered indulgences permissible, he is now convinced that they are a worthless invention of the Romanists. While he had granted at least human origin and privileges to the papacy, he now has reached the conclusion that the reign of the pope is nothing but "the kingdom of Babylon and the dominion of Nimrod the mighty hunter." The popes have perverted the sacraments instituted by Christ, and, by establishing new sacraments which are not founded upon the Bible, they hold the Church captive. Christ's intention in giving the sacraments to the Church was to grant to his children tokens of their freedom; "they were intended to be the seals to our titles as free children of God: the pope uses them to keep us in bondage from birth to death. The seven sacraments are the seven rings in the chain which yoke us to the Roman priesthood."

This is the leading thought of the little book which might be called the proclamation of a new order of things. The whole mediæval life was based upon the idea that the Church, with her means of grace, was the only power that could bring men to heaven, and on this foundation the immense structure of ecclesiasticism, in fact the whole social order, had been reared. Luther knocks out one stone after the other from this foundation, the whole edifice crumbles down, and the foundation on which modern evangelical Christianity rests is proclaimed

by him; viz., every one can be saved by becoming united in faith to the living Christ. This is the individualistic keynote of modern Christianity.

The confessor of the emperor witnesses to the marvelous impression the book made by telling that while reading it, he felt as if some one lashed him from head to foot. Of course it did not remain unchallenged. A Dominican friar in Rome wrote a virulent refutation, the University of Paris passed judgment on it, and King Henry VIII of England published a book against it which earned him the title of "Defender of the Faith."

When timid friends argued that the logical consequences of his opinions would overthrow the traditions of many centuries, Luther's answer was: "What do I care for that which has been customary? The Word of God must take the precedence."

One more pamphlet must be mentioned in this connection. It is not polemical or political; on the contrary, it is a purely devotional book, touching exclusively questions relating to the inner spiritual life. It is, however, closely connected with the two preceding treatises, the three constituting the great and comprehensive platform of the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

The "Freedom of the Christian" defines with great clearness and exquisite tenderness the position of the child of God as a most free lord over all things and subject to no one, but at the same time as a ministering servant and subject to every one. He is free from all legal obligations through faith, but a debtor to all mankind through love. Through

faith he reaches upward to God, through love downward to his neighbor.

Says the renowned Luther biographer, Dr. Köstlin: "These three treatises taken together are the chief reformatory writings of Luther. In the first one Luther calls Christendom in general to the battle against the outward abuses and pretensions of the pope and of the class that boasted of being the only one possessing a spiritual and priestly character; in the second he exposes and also breaks the spiritual bond whereby this class, through the so-called means of grace, kept souls in bondage; while in the third he reaches the most profound and important question pertaining to the relation of the Christian soul to its God and Redeemer, and the way and nature of salvation. Here he lays explicitly and firmly the strong foundations on which the Christian may build his life and character, and which no spiritual tyranny can rob him of."

It was a long way which Martin Luther had traveled in those three short years.

CHAPTER X.

THE BULL OF EXCOMMUNICATION.

On June 15, 1520, in the midst of frivolous and dissolute festivities, His Holiness, Pope Leo X, found time to sign the bull which, in course of time, caused the greatest schism that the Church had seen since the Arian secession. The bull was the joint product of Eck, Prierias, Cajetan, and a number of other Roman theologians and politicians, and it took these learned and shrewd diplomats three months before they were able to read the first draft in the papal consistory, and two more months to polish and finish the important document.

Having basked for a while in the glory of his pretended victory over Luther in the Leipzig disputation, Professor Eck had gone to Rome, where he was introduced to the pope by four cardinals. Humbly and devoutly he kissed the pope's feet, when, to the great astonishment of all present, the holy father asked him to rise, and kissed him. Eck made good use of his opportunities. In a short time he could report that his journey to Rome was providential since the pope knew too little of Luther's dreadful heresies, and was glad to be more enlightened. Dr. Eck, of course, felt himself called to enlighten the pope. The result was the fatal bull condemning the Wittenberg monk and bidding him

once more to revoke within sixty days lest he should be irrevocably excommunicated from the Church and from the kingdom of grace and glory. Another result, less known but none the less well pleasing to Eck, was his appointment to a rich benefice in Ingolstadt.

The bull itself was a strange mixture of sanctimonious cant and dignified misrepresentations. It commences: "Arise, O Lord, and judge Thy cause! Be mindful of the reproaches with which the foolish reproach Thee daily. Incline Thine ears to our prayers, since foxes have arisen seeking to spoil the vineyard,—whose care, government, and administration Thou didst intrust to Peter as its head and Thy vicar, and to his successors; the boar out of the woods is seeking to waste it, and a peculiar wild beast does devour it."

"Arise, O Peter, attend to the cause of the holy Roman Church, the mother of all Churches and mistress of the faith. Arise thou, too, O Paul! . . . Finally let the entire congregation of saints and the rest of the Church universal arise. . . . Some whose minds are blinded by the father of lies, wise in their own eyes, interpret the Holy Scriptures otherwise than the Holy Spirit requireth."

Then follow forty-two sentences taken at random from Luther's writings, torn out of their legitimate connection and twisted in sense, which are condemned because "no one of sound mind is ignorant how poisonous, how pernicious, how seductive to godly and simple minds, and finally how contrary to all love and reverence for the holy Roman

Church—the foundation and source of all virtue, without which every one is proved to be an infidel—these errors are." It is prohibited "in any way to read, quote, preach, commend, print, publish, or defend the writings of Luther," since they "spread this pestilence and cancerous disease;" on the contrary, the pope commands that a diligent search be made for said writings, and that they be publicly and solemnly burned in the presence of the clergy and the people.

It is touching to read how tenderly the chief shepherd cares for the wayward sheep: "As to Martinus himself, good God! what office of paternal affection have we neglected or left undone or omitted, in order to recall him from such errors? But he has disobeyed persistently." Now the holy father is compelled, if Martinus does not recant, to cut him and his adherents off as withered branches, not abiding in Christ. All faithful Christians are required, under penalty of excommunication, to arrest him and send him to Rome; an interdict will be pronounced on any place harboring Luther; the bull must be made public in all churches, and the wrath of God Almighty and of the blessed apostles will be sure to fall upon all who dare to be unmindful of this decree.

To crown Eck's success he was appointed papal nuncio to promulgate the bull in Germany. On September 21st, he posted the bull in Meissen, a few days later in Merseburg and in Brandenburg. He sent copies to the various universities and to the princes. But nearly everywhere he met with a cold reception. The University of Erfurt declined to

publish the bull: the printed copies were seized by the students and thrown into the river, in order to find out "whether the bubble (bulla) could float." In Leipzig, the scene of his cheap triumphs of the previous year, the students annoyed him so much that he did not dare to leave his safe quarters. In Torgau, as well as in other cities, the copies which were posted to the church doors were bespattered with mud and torn down. The University of Wittenberg refused to accept the bull as genuine. Elector Frederick, although protesting that he did not countenance any heretical tendencies, still insisted that his professor should not be condemned without having been tried before impartial judges. He had requested Erasmus to give his opinion on the matter, and received the following trenchant reply: "Luther has sinned in two respects: he touched the crown of the pope and the stomachs of the monks."

Every effort was made by the Romanists to carry into effect the provisions of the bull. The papal legate and his friends who attended the German Diet did their utmost to influence the emperor and the princes against the heretic, and they succeeded in having Luther's writings publicly burned in Mainz, Cologne, Löwen, and other cities on the Rhine. It was evident that this could not be done without the approval of the emperor. About one-hundred and fifty students, mostly dependent on Church stipends, were induced to leave Wittenberg, and the rumor was spread that the university would fall under the papal interdict and be closed. Elector Frederick was alarmed. Whoever touched his uni-

versity, touched the apple of his eye. He forthwith sent Spalatin to Wittenberg to investigate the matter, but was satisfied when the report came that over four hundred students attended the daily lectures of Dr. Luther, while nearly six hundred were to be found in Melanchthon's lecture hall.

Luther remained undaunted. He wrote to his friend Spalatin: "At last the Roman bull, brought by Eck, has arrived. I shall act as if it were a forged bull, although I believe that it is genuine. How I do wish that Emperor Charles were a man and would go for those Satans in the name of Christ! I have no fears as to my own person; God's will be done." In order to appreciate Luther's coolness and courage we must remember that Pirkheimer, "the first citizen of Germany," as he has been called, Spengler, and the other influential Humanists mentioned by name in the bull, were, in spite of the dissatisfaction with Rome, so frightened by the threat of excommunication that they speedily recanted and obtained absolution. Ulrich von Hutten, the valiant knight who had emblazoned upon his coat of arms the bold legend, "I have dared it," when it was rumored that the pope demanded his extradition, wrote in pitiful despair: "I should be torn away from here! O wretched man that I am! I should be compelled to leave these skies, these flocks, these altars! Help, countrymen! Assist me! Don't suffer that I, who attempted to liberate you, should be imprisoned!"

Such was the power the pope wielded over the minds even of brave and cultured men. Among those who lost courage and deserted Luther at this

critical time was also his old friend and counselor, his "Father in the Gospel," Dr. Staupitz. He resigned his position as vicar-general of the order of the Augustinians, and retired to the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg, one of Luther's bitterest enemies, where he was forced to subscribe to the condemnation of the doctrines of his former pupil and friend, and where he spent the rest of his days in seclusion, an unhappy monk, bearing down into his grave a seared conscience.

In accordance with his first plan, Luther wrote a tract on "The New Bull and Lies of Eck," which was soon followed by a formal "Appeal to a General Council," and by another pamphlet published both in Latin and German, "Against the Execrable Bull of Antichrist." He calls the pope's edict "a cursed, impudent, and devilish bull," and holds that its author, whoever he may be, was inspired by Antichrist himself. "Thee, Leo X, and you, ye cardinals of Rome I address, and to your face I freely say: If this bull has gone forth in your name and with your knowledge, and you acknowledge it, I exhort and admonish you in the Lord to repent and to make an end of these diabolical blasphemies, and that, too, speedily. Unless this be done, know that I, with all who worship Christ, will regard your see possessed of Satan and as the accursed abode of Antichrist, whom we not only can not obey, but must detest and execrate as the chief enemy of Christ." Complying with the wish of the Elector, he also wrote an elaborate explanation of the forty-two sentences named in the bull, which he published

under the title, "The Foundation and Reason of all the Articles Lately Condemned by the Roman Bull."

His position was by no means enviable. Go back he could not. It would have been against his conscience, and, besides, it would have meant certain death. A more timid man would, perhaps, have tried some way of reconciliation, and would have failed. Luther decided that his safety lay in an act of unprecedented defiance. The pope demanded that the writings of the monk should be burned; the monk made up his mind to answer by publicly and solemnly burning the writings of the pope.

On Monday, December 10th, early in the morning, the students and the public at large saw the following notice posted on the doors of the Stadt-Kirche: "All friends of evangelical truth are invited to assemble about nine o'clock at the Church of the Holy Cross without the city walls. At that place, according to ancient apostolical usage, the godless books of the Papal Constitutions and the Scholastic Theology will be burned, inasmuch as the presumption of the enemies of the Gospel has advanced to such a degree that they have cast the godly, evangelical books of Dr. Luther into the fire. Let all earnest students, therefore, appear at this sacred and religious spectacle; for it is now the time when Antichrist must be exposed."

Not far from the "Elster Gate" is the spot where the belongings of those who had died of the plague used to be burned. A large pyre had been erected there. Most of the professors, nearly all the students, and a crowd of citizens assembled at the

stated time. A slim figure, clad in a monk's hood, with haggard features, deep-set eyes, which were fairly burning, stepped from the crowd. It was Martin Luther. He placed the Papal Constitutions on top of the pyre, one of the teachers applied the torch, and when the flames were leaping heavenward, the monk stepped up once more and exclaiming, "Because thou dost trouble the Holy One of the Lord—Mark i, 24 [meaning Christ, of course, not himself]—may eternal fire consume thee," he threw the bull of excommunication into the fire.

It was to him a most solemn, a sacred act. Quietly he left the place, accompanied by his colleagues, and repaired to his cell.

It could not be expected, of course, that the students would let this splendid chance to have some fun slip by without making the best of it. They fetched a peasant's wagon, nailed a bull of several yards' length to a long pole, sang dirges and songs mocking the pope, carried banners with sarcastic inscriptions, drove from house to house to collect the books of Luther's opponents, and replenished the smoldering flames again and again. The whole town was in an uproar. Meanwhile Luther sat quietly in his cell and wrote a tract, "Why the Books of the Pope and of His Disciples were Burned by Dr. Martin Luther."

Luther's oak, just outside the Elster Gate in the city of Wittenberg, is still visited every year by hundreds of tourists. It is a sturdy old tree, surrounded by an iron railing. A little tablet bears the inscription, "Dr. Martin Luther burned at this place on December 10, 1520, the papal bull." And well may

this historic place be pointed out to succeeding generations and the deed be commemorated, because, as Dr. Schaff rightly says: "The burning of the pope's bull was the boldest and most eventful act of Luther. Viewed in itself it might have been only an act of fanaticism and folly, and proved a *'brutum fulmen.'* But it was preceded and followed by heroic acts of faith in pulling down an old church and building up a new one. It defied the greatest power on earth, before which emperors and kings and princes, and all the nations of Europe, bowed in reverence and awe. It was the fiery signal of absolute and final separation from Rome, and destroyed the effects of future papal bulls upon one-half of Western Christendom. It emancipated Luther and the entire Protestant world from that authority which, from a wholesome school of discipline for young nations, had become a fearful and intolerable tyranny over the intellects and consciences of men."

On January 3, 1521, the final bull of excommunication was issued by which Luther and his adherents, "the Lutherans," were cut off from the Church and given to eternal perdition, and in which the emperor and all princes were enjoined to execute all the temporal punishments which the Church canons decree against heretics.

CHAPTER XI.

FACING THE EMPEROR AND HIS PRINCES.

GERMANY had a new emperor. While Martin Luther was in Leipzig, disputing with Dr. Eck, the German electors had elected, on June 28, 1519, Charles, King of Spain, as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, to use the official designation.

The last wish of Emperor Maximilian was fulfilled. The imperial crown went to his grandson, in spite of the intrigues of the pope and the bribes of King Francis of France, whose agents spent money lavishly to effect the election of their sovereign.

Strange, that two foreign monarchs should be the candidates for the highest dignity that Germany could bestow. It is true the crown was offered to the highly respected Frederick, Elector of Saxony, but this prince, showing that he indeed deserved the surname "The Wise," declined the honor. He realized the difficulty of assuming the exalted position without possessing the power and wealth necessary to enforce his policy. It was Frederick whose voice was of greatest weight with the German princes; it was he whose decision, above everything else,

had given the coveted crown to Charles, and the young emperor was not unmindful of this fact.

Charles V, King of Spain, of the Netherlands, of Sicily, heir to all the possessions of the House of Habsburg, whose residences were Toledo and Naples, Brussels and Vienna, was, at the time of his election to the imperial throne, a young man of twenty years, without any special signs of greatness of character or promises of achievement. The son of a demented mother, he was wavering between a tendency to melancholia, which finally drove him to abdicate his throne and end his days in a secluded cloister, and between gratifying his unbridled sensual lusts and appetites, which undermined his constitution and made him an old man at a time when he ought to have been in the full strength of manhood. Educated in the strictest traditions of somber, legal, superstitious Catholic faith, and surrounded by bigoted Catholics, he did not understand the great religious questions that were agitating the minds of his German subjects. At heart a Spaniard, he cared more for his Spanish possessions than for the welfare of the German empire, and had no sympathy whatever with the longing for national freedom. He was German emperor, but did not know the German language; he was the head of the German nation, but in his sympathies and aspirations he remained a foreigner all the days of his life.

And this was the man whom the knights cheered as the coming liberator of Germany; to whom the religious reformers looked up as to the "young and noble blood" who was to free them from the Roman

yoke; everybody who was hoping and working for liberty—religious, social, political liberty—set their hopes on him, and they were all sorely disappointed.

His policy was dictated exclusively by the exigencies of the coming conflict with France. Francis I and Charles V were not only rivals for the imperial crown, they were the great rivals for the control of Europe. Both saw in the imperial throne merely a help to further their ulterior ends; both needed the assistance of the pope, and both knew perfectly well the pope would support the one from whom he could expect most returns. Up to that time he had openly favored Francis; the question now was, whether Charles could win him over to his side without sacrificing too much.

The conflicting interests of the Habsburg dynasty represented by Charles, of the House of Valois represented by Francis, of the papacy represented by Leo, and finally of dozens of selfish, narrow-minded, dissenting, quarreling princes and free cities, were the stakes in this game of high diplomacy. In a most critical moment of the game this monk Luther appeared, and had to be taken into consideration. To Charles V he was nothing but a pawn on the chess-board, used at will to check a dreaded move of the antagonist, or sacrificed to gain a coveted advantage.

The greatest religious and social movement which had occurred since the founding of the Christian Church was looked upon by the mighty ones of this world as something insignificant in comparison with the questions of boundaries and revenues, of titles and military honors. A few centuries have

passed, and all those petty issues are dead and buried, but the soul-stirring questions raised by Martin Luther still influence and permeate the daily lives of increasing millions among the leading nations of the globe.

Space forbids to enter into the intricate movements of the diplomatic game played while Charles was slowly traveling up the Rhine, to be crowned in Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) in the fall of 1520, and during the first few weeks of his first Diet, which opened in the old city of Worms on the upper Rhine in the month of January, 1521. The pope had sent as his nuncio one of the shrewdest, most active, and most unscrupulous of ecclesiastical politicians, Girolamo Aleandro, or Aleander, who succeeded by means of liberal bribes in building up a regular political machine, extending into the chambers of the emperor and into the offices of his secretaries. His reports to Rome are very interesting reading. They give a picture of the proceedings in their minutest details, and show his keen judgment of men and things, but also betray his character. Thus he writes upon one occasion: "I dissimulated quite cleverly, and told some courteous lies, which, in the interest of the holy faith and of my commission, I could not help doing."

When the papal request that the bull of excommunication should be executed in Germany was read to the Diet, Aleander supported it in an address of three hours' length. He made it plain that there were some sentences in Luther's last few publications "sufficient, on account of them, for the burning of several thousand heretics." To call the

reprobate monk before the Diet was, in his opinion, entirely unnecessary, since the Church through her head had passed judgment; and, besides, the heretic did not even recognize the authority of a General Council. Notwithstanding his clever diplomacy and the favors shown by Rome to Glapion, the Franciscan confessor of the emperor, after hesitating a long time it was decided to summon Luther to appear before the Diet.

It was on March 26th when an imperial herald, clad in his brilliant uniform and accompanied by a servant, rode through the city gate of Wittenberg and delivered the summons to "the Honorable, the Dear and the Devout Martinus Luther" to appear within twenty-one days, under promise of safe conduct, before His Majesty, in order to give information concerning the books and doctrines which he had promulgated. Aleander in Worms was fuming when he heard that the condemned heretic was addressed in such respectful terms.

Would Luther go? He was not ignorant of the fate of John Huss, who was summoned to Constance, likewise under promise of safe conduct, and was burned at the stake by Emperor Sigismund. He had not forgotten the death of Savonarola. He knew that his own writings were burned by command of the emperor in the Netherlands. Would Charles keep his word, when Luther once was in his power?

A few months before, when Elector Frederick had asked "his monk" whether or not he were willing to come to Worms if summoned, he had given the following answer: "If I am called, I shall go;

and if I were too sick to go, I shall have them carry me. It were wrong to doubt that God calls me when the emperor calls."

He was still of the same opinion. Go he would. To Melanchthon he remarked: "If I do not return, and my enemies murder me, I conjure you, dear brother, to persevere in teaching the truth. If you remain, I can well be spared."

Accompanied by another monk, in accordance with the rule of the order, and by his colleague Amsdorf, and by a young nobleman, Peter Swaven, who studied in Wittenberg, he set out in a plain wagon, furnished by the city magistrate. His trip was, in fact, a triumphal procession. A Roman priest reports: "When Luther entered a city, the people ran to meet him. Everybody wanted to see that wonderful man who was so bold as to oppose himself against the pope and the whole world."

At Erfurt, the scene of his early studies and struggles, he was received like a prince, the Humanist leaders of the university using the occasion of his visit for a public demonstration against the hated monks and the clerics in general. He preached to a crowded house. In the midst of his discourse the densely packed galleries cracked. Immediately a panic ensued. But Luther's powerful voice was heard above the noise: "Be quiet, good people, it is only the devil. He is playing one of his tricks, that is all. I know thy malice, thou Satan!"

He was, however, frequently reminded of the dangers which lurked in his path. In more than one place the party noticed the imperial edict posted up, which commanded his books to be delivered to the

magistrates; he also received warnings from his faithful friend Spalatin, but answered: "You may expect anything from me but fear or recantation. I shall not flee, still less recant. Christ lives, and we shall come to Worms in spite of all the gates of hell and powers of the air."

Notwithstanding his perilous situation and his feeble health, he was of good cheer. More than one of his opponents afterward took occasion to indulge in sanctimonious reflection upon the frivolity of the arch-heretic "who played merry tunes on the lute in his lodging-places on the journey."

The nearer he came, the more were attempts made by the Romanists either to prevent his coming or, at least, to delay him beyond the twenty-one days of his safe conduct. Glapion went to Hutten and Sickingen, and prevailed upon them to invite Luther to the latter's castle Ebernburg, near Worms. The Elector expressed his apprehensions. Luther's name was too often coupled with the names of Savonarola, of Huss, of Wiclif. But Luther was not to be intimidated. "I shall go to Worms, even if there were there as many devils as tiles on the roofs," was his decisive reply.

It was on the 16th day of April, at the time of the day when the good citizens of Worms and their many visitors partook of the principal meal, that the guard at the city gate blew his horn, the signal that a troop of horsemen was approaching. Everybody surmised that it was Martin Luther and his escort, and everybody left the tables and rushed to the windows or to the streets. Soon all available places, even the roofs, were packed. Now they

came. First the imperial herald, then a company of mounted noblemen, and next the wagon with the monk and his companions. On either side rode a Saxon knight on his charger, and fifty or more horsemen brought up the rear.

Aleander was furious. His efforts to keep the "son of Belial" away from the Diet having been thwarted, he urged that the "condemned heretic" should be brought to Worms in all secrecy, and should be held under close watch, nobody being allowed to see him. And now he had to witness this spectacle, and had to report to his master that when the heretic left his vehicle in the court of the Knights of St. John, he was embraced and his garment was touched three times, as if it were a most precious relic. "This Luther looked about him with his diabolical eyes and said, 'God will be with me.' The whole world was running together to see him."

It was natural that the Romanists wished to have the trial dispatched as quickly as possible. In fact, it was not to be a trial at all. Rome had spoken; no trial was necessary. It was only in order to pacify the unruly Germans that Luther was to be given another opportunity to recant. If he did not revoke, he was to be condemned. Every detail was arranged, every question prepared. Luther was not to have the privilege of speaking; he was only to answer, "Yes," or "No;" in short, everything was cut and dried.

On the day after his arrival, at four o'clock in the afternoon, he was to appear before the Diet. At the appointed time the lord marshal and the imperial herald called to escort him. Every street being packed with curious throngs they hurried him

through back gates, gardens, and alleys to the Bishop's Court.

A few moments later he was standing before the emperor and his princes, before the cardinals and archbishops, before the cream of the German nation. "Seated on a chair of state, which was covered with gold brocade and overhung by a canopy of the same material, sat the emperor; on the one side were seated all the electors, on the other the cardinals," reports an eye-witness. The spacious hall was filled to the last place. Every eye was fixed upon the haggard monk with the pale, sunken cheeks and the deep-set, flaming eyes.

On a table in front of him lay a number of books.

"Have you written these books, and will you recant their contents?" demanded the clerk, who, by the way, had definite instructions from Aleander, and was paid handsomely for complying with the same.

"Let the titles be read," quickly replied Luther's attorney and friend, Dr. Schurf.

"Then the titles were read, and they all were my books," related Luther himself. As to the question of recantation, this was of so great importance, involving his eternal destiny, that he was not ready to give a definite answer, and would ask for a respite to consider it more thoroughly.

This reply was unexpected. The Romanists were provoked. They were very anxious to have judgment pronounced at once. Luther's friends were perplexed, some thinking that he was intimidated, perhaps wavering. Some report says that his voice was low and hardly audible. Yet he sim-

ply followed the instructions given him by the counselors of his prince. Contrary to the wish of the Romanists, they desired to delay the final decision as long as possible. Finally a respite of one day was granted.

"My poor monk, my poor monk!" said the famous leader of the German Landsknechte, Colonel George von Frundsberg, to him when on the following day he was conducted again to the Bishop's Court. "Thou art going to make such a stand as neither I nor any of my companions in arms ever have made in our hottest battles. If thou art sure of the justice of thy cause, then forward in God's name and be of good cheer; God will not forsake thee."

Again the peasant's son stood before the most august assembly in the world on that memorable day, the 18th of April, 1521. It was growing dark; the torches were being lit; the hall was still more crowded than on the previous day.

"Will you defend all your books, or will you revoke some things?" he heard the clerk say.

Now the supreme moment of Martin Luther's life had come. In a firm, clear voice, with great boldness of spirit, he spoke first in Latin; then, upon request, also in German, although he was greatly exhausted by the heat and by his own emotion.

Prefacing his address with an apology for any blunder he might make, since he was not accustomed to courtly usages, he again affirmed that the books on the table were written by him. They were to be classified in three groups. The first treated of Christian life and faith, and his opponents, even

the papal bull, admitted that they contain many good and useful thoughts. To revoke these would mean to condemn the truth. The second group treated of grievances against the popes, who were guilty of many acts of tyranny and wickedness. To revoke these would mean to open the doors and windows to the most mischievous tyranny. The third group comprised pamphlets against individual opponents. He confessed that, at times, he had expressed himself more severely than was good, but as to the matter at issue he could not recant. However, being only a man, not God, and therefore liable to err, he would beg by the grace of God of anybody who could do so, to show him his errors by proofs from the Bible. "If convicted, I am willing and ready to revoke any error and shall be the first one to throw my books into the fire."

This carefully worded reply was really an invitation to a discussion. But a disputation with the condemned heretic must be avoided by all means. The papal nuncio and the emperor had agreed on that point. So Luther was told that his errors were nothing new, and consequently needed no discussion. They were the old errors of Wiclif and Huss, and were condemned long ago by the Council of Constance.

"Will you revoke these errors? We desire a plain answer without horns or without a cover."

This challenge called forth Luther's famous answer: "Since His Imperial Majesty wants a plain answer, I shall give him a plain answer without horns or teeth. Unless I am refuted and convicted by testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear

arguments—since I believe neither the popes nor the Councils alone, it being evident that they have often erred and contradicted one another—I am conquered by the passages of the Holy Scriptures I have quoted, and my conscience is bound in the Word of God. I can not and will not recant anything, since it is unsafe and dangerous to act against one's conscience."

Some more words were spoken; but the emperor had risen and thus closed the session. The audience commenced to disperse, and thus it happened that the last words of the Reformer were lost in the noise and confusion. They are reported as follows: "Here I stand. I can not do otherwise. God help me. Amen."

These remarkable words are inscribed on the magnificent monument of Luther which is standing to-day in the city of Worms.

CHAPTER XII.

LUTHER DISAPPEARS.

"I am through! I am through!" Luther exclaimed, joyfully, when he reached his quarters again. "If I had a thousand heads I would rather have them all cut off than to revoke," he remarked the same evening.

The city was greatly stirred up. Handbills and posters were scattered clandestinely, threatening open revolt. Luther's address was printed at once, and scattered broadcast. In the chambers of the emperor a slip of paper was found containing the words, "Woe unto the land whose king is a child!" Luther was constantly in demand. "Many princes, counts, barons, knights, noblemen, priests, monks, laymen, not to mention the common people, came to see him. They simply beleaguered his house and could not see enough of him," writes a contemporary.

Most of the German princes and noblemen were, as we have seen before, in full sympathy with his attacks upon the Roman abuses and encroachments upon national liberties, and in order to emphasize these the more, and not to encumber them with what they considered secondary matters, they desired Luther to drop his heretical opinions touching questions of faith and dogma. Says the Venetian

ambassador: "If this man had been wise enough to confine himself to his first accusations and had not gone astray in the field of theology, he would have been, I can not say favored, I must say worshiped, by everybody in Germany."

The emperor was prevailed upon to extend Luther's safe conduct for a few days, and from morning till late at night during the days from the 19th to the 25th of April the Reformer was in consultation with a commission and with individuals representing the German estates. They argued and pleaded with him; they pictured the immense advantages that could be gained to the whole nation if he would only be willing to compromise, and again they pointed out to him the embarrassing position into which his friends were placed should he remain obstinate. A bloody war would follow, which might devastate all Germany.

Luther realized that these pleadings were not inspired by Rome, but were meant in good faith. Moreover, they were made by men whom he honored. Should he yield?

Those few days of private negotiations were a greater strain on him than his public appearance before the Diet. He had done his full duty before God and men, and had done it well. And now these same friends who praised him, who were interested in the welfare of the nation, who knew much more about questions of practical statesmanship than the monk knew,—these men were urging him to drop speculative and dogmatic questions and unite with them in achieving tangible results in the field of national reforms. Was he, after all, right

in tenaciously adhering to the doctrinal points, and thus jeopardizing a national movement bidding fair to succeed? Again and again he must have pondered these questions in his own mind. But he could see no way out. He was neither a political nor a religious reformer; he was a witness of what he had experienced in his own life by the power of the Word of God. To shift his point of view and let himself be influenced by political considerations, be they ever so commendable, would have been to betray the voice of God in his soul. He could not yield.

His conscience proved to be a safer guide than the advice and the diplomatic schemes of the politicians. Says Professor Hausrath: "He penetrated deeper than those well-meaning politicians. The errors in doctrine were, to his mind, inseparably connected with the abuses in practice, just as the bad root with the foul fruit. If he did not attack the former, he could not resist the latter. From the doctrine of purgatory resulted the abuse of indulgences; from the sacrament of priestly ordination followed the servitude of the laity; the erroneous doctrine of justification led to the whole system of outward works and rites which choked all living faith and spiritual life. Just because he saw clearer than did his political patrons, he could not acquiesce to their wishes, and consequently all efforts to effect a compromise were doomed to failure at the outset."

Luther remained firm as a rock. "Unless I am convinced by Scripture or clear arguments, I can not yield; let come what God sees fit." On April

25th the emperor granted him a letter of safe conduct back to Wittenberg, and on the next morning he left.

"The villain has left," reported Aleander, and added, "We shall do our best." He certainly did his best. So deftly did he lay his wires that he himself was requested by Charles to write the edict pronouncing the ban of the empire over Luther and all his sympathizers. It was the most spiteful, malicious, the bitterest and fiercest edict ever issued by an emperor of Germany. It betrays in every sentence the fiendish joy of revenge and the intense satisfaction of having totally crushed the enemy. Luther and all his sympathizers were outlawed. Wherever he was found he was to be arrested. Whoever dared to assist him in any way, did so at his own risk. His adherents were to be driven from their homes, and all their belongings could be appropriated by whoever desired to possess them.

On May 25th, after most princes had left Worms, Aleander presented the document to the emperor immediately after mass in the cathedral. It was signed on the spot.

A shameful fraud was perpetrated by the Spanish king who wore the imperial crown and by the envoy of His Holiness. The edict which in the name of the German emperor and of the German princes declared Luther an outlaw, was not authorized by the Diet; it was never submitted to the Diet; but, in order to make it appear so, it was dated back to May 8th. On the next day the emperor went on board of his ship, sailed down the Rhine, and was soon outside of the German empire.

The pope and the emperor were now good friends. Leo acceded to the wishes of Charles. The ratification by the emperor of the papal bull of excommunication was the price paid for the favor of the pope.

But where was Luther? Nobody seemed to know. One thing was sure, he had not returned to Wittenberg. It was reported that the party had been waylaid, and that Luther was kidnaped. Soon the air was full of rumors. Some declared the papists had murdered him, others that some enemy of the Elector held him captive; others had heard that his corpse was found in an abandoned mine. Some said he had escaped to the King of Denmark, others that he was in safety with Hutten and Sickingen. Aleander, however, shrewd as he was, wrote to Rome: "My personal opinion is that Luther is kept in a safe place, either in Wittenberg or in some castle belonging to one of the Elector's faithful knights."

He was not far from right; but how could he prove it? Frederick was ready to swear an oath that he did not know where Luther was, and, of course, he spoke the truth. He did not know precisely to which castle his knights had taken Luther, nor did he want to know. But he had given orders to bring the monk secretly to some safe place of hiding and keep him there for the present.

In a narrow ravine near Altenstein in the Thuringian Mountains, where the road winds up the hill through a dense forest of birch-trees, is standing to-day, surrounded by a railing, the trunk of an old, weatherbeaten and lightning-struck birch, called

"die Lutherbuche." Near by is a plain monument commemorative of what took place at this spot on a dark evening in April, 1521.

A wagon, in which some monks were seated, slowly drove up the hill. Suddenly, armed horsemen appeared. The wagon was held up in regular fashion, the driver cuffed and beaten. One of the monks jumped out and escaped into the woods, followed by the curses of the waylayers; the other was quickly lifted upon a horse, and the whole troop rapidly galloped away.

A few days later it was known in the little city of Eisenach that the castle, towering above the city, lodged a noble guest. He had arrived late one night in company with the lord of the castle. His name was Junker Jörg (Sir George). Nobody could ascertain whence he came, or how long he was going to stay, or what was the object of his visit. He was dressed like a knight. Smoothly shaven at first, he, after a few weeks, wore a full beard. Most of the time he spent in his own room; sometimes he would take long walks or go riding or hunting, always accompanied by a page. But he did not seem to be very fond of the usual pastimes of noblemen.

The real name of this mysterious knight was Martin Luther.

BOOK III

BUILDING UP THE NEW

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GERMAN BIBLE.

THERE are few places in Germany dearer to the hearts of the German people than the Wartburg. Located on a lofty eminence in the northern part of the Thuringian Mountains it commands a fine view over hills and vales, dense birch-forests, sparkling streams, picturesque villages. The fine old castle was carefully rebuilt in its original style of architecture, and presents a magnificent appearance when seen either from the city of Eisenach at its feet or from any of the numerous points of view round about.

Innumerable legends cluster about the Wartburg and connect it with almost all the great epochs of German life and civilization. Here the famous Sängerkrieg took place. Walther von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Heinrich von Ofterdingen, and others renowned in song and story, assembled in its spacious halls. Here the saintly Elizabeth, the wife of the rough landgrave, spent her life in doing good. Nearly every spot in the neighborhood of the Burg is connected with some deed of historic interest or some charming legend.

But, above all, the Wartburg owes its fame to Martin Luther's stay there. In the little room

reached from the outer court, with its plain old furniture, a table, an arm-chair, a bedstead, an oaken chest, all of them carved and massive, Junker Jörg pored day after day over his books, wrote letters, pamphlets, sermons, and gave to his people a gift of priceless value—the German Bible.

No greater change can be imagined than that which Luther experienced in his quiet seclusion "in the region of the birds," after the turmoil and the excitement of the previous weeks in Worms. His restless spirit was chafing under the enforced leisure. The changed mode of life, the lack of exercise, the sumptuous fare with which he was supplied, caused him physical trouble. The question whether his work was really owned by God recurred constantly. He was thrown into doubts and temptations, and, considering his bodily and mental weariness, we can understand the fierce struggles which he had to encounter, and which often totally dejected him. More than once he seemed to hear, or even see, the great adversary in person, and in the "Lutherstube" the guide points out the spot on the wall where, according to tradition, he threw the inkbottle at the devil.

He certainly made good use of his time. "I am at leisure, yet very busy studying Greek and Hebrew and writing incessantly," he wrote to Wittenberg. Books of devotion, controversial writings, tracts for the times, sermons, letters flowed from his ready pen. But of greatest importance was the translation of the New Testament which he commenced in November, 1521.

The need of a German Bible became more ap-

parent to him as events in Wittenberg and in other cities took their course. He valued the Scriptures above everything else as the record of God's revelation to mankind, and as the guide-book for the faith and life both of the individual Christian and of the Church. He had fought the tyranny which the Church exercised over the consciences of the believers; he wanted to free them and make them independent of human authority, grounded only on the Bible as illumined by the operation of the Holy Spirit and by sane grammatical interpretation. But this shifting of the seat of authority necessitated the study, even the mastery, of the record of God's revelation by the individual believer. Christians must be rooted and grounded in God's Word, else their growth will be impeded by traditional notions, or they may be carried away by heedless radicals. Thus he writes from the Wartburg to his congregation at Wittenberg: "No clearer Book has been written in this wide world than the Bible. Compared with all other books it is like the sun over all other lights. Don't let them lead you out of and away from it, much as they may try to do so. For if you step out, you are lost; they take you wherever they wish. If you remain within, you will be victorious."

Luther was by no means the first one to conceive the plan of translating the Bible into the German language. The oldest monument extant of German Christian literature is the Gothic Bible of Bishop Ulfilas, who died in the year 383. From the ninth century we possess the "Heliand," a grand epic, describing the life of the Savior, and also the "Gos-

pel-Book" of the monk Otfried, which is a life of Christ in verses. When the art of printing was introduced, a number of German Bibles were printed; at the time when Luther commenced his work there existed at least fourteen translations in High German and four in Low German dialects.

But they all were based upon the Vulgate, the Latin version authorized by the Church; they were inaccurate; their German was clumsy, stiff; none of them was widely circulated or possessed the elements that would bespeak for it general acceptance.

It was Martin Luther who created a book for the people; a book which the Germans everywhere accepted, which they read, which they loved, which molded not only their religious and moral convictions, but which influenced their mode of thought and manner of expression. Luther gave to his people, not merely a German version of the Bible, but a German Bible. No book has ever done for any nation what Luther's Bible did for the Germans. Its influence upon the nation was even greater than that of the English Bible upon the English people. It became the first real German "Volksbuch," the most powerful agency for the creation and unification of the German language and ultimately of the German nation.

Erasmus Albers, a contemporary of Luther said: "Our Lord God has illumined the German language through Dr. Martin Luther. He has not only shown us the true religion, but also given us our language. He is the German Cicero." Jacob Grimm, the highest authority on Germanic languages, says in the Preface to his German grammar, "Luther's

German is the kernel and foundation of the new High German." Luther's Bible is still the great religious and moral classic of the Germans.

Martin Luther possessed all the necessary qualifications for his great undertaking. Although his knowledge of the original languages was limited, he knew them sufficiently well to penetrate into the depth and very essence of the meaning of the text. He was perfectly familiar with the Bible as a whole; he was, as it were, living in the thoughts of the Bible. This was of paramount importance; for, as he himself says, a good translation "requires a truly devout, faithful, diligent Christian,—a learned, experienced, practical heart."

In the next place he had a perfect mastery of the language of the German people. His humble birth, his constant mingling with the common people, stood him in good stead. No one among his contemporaries could use the German language more lucidly, more forcibly, and in a more pleasing manner to suit all classes of society. Natural gifts and incessant practical studies united to make him a truly linguistic genius. Add to these traits an intense love for his people, to whom he desired to give his very best, with a diligence and care almost incredible, and we have the secret of his success as a translator.

It was a difficult task which Luther set himself to accomplish. Linguistic studies were in their infancy; there were no dictionaries, no concordances, no grammars, except the imperfect attempts of Reuchlin and of Erasmus. And even to these scant helps Luther had no access on the Wartburg,

nor was he in a position to consult his learned friends. He had absolutely nothing but the Greek text of Erasmus, printed in Basel in 1519, and the Vulgate. But he resolutely went to work, and when, in March, 1522, he was ready to leave his "Patmos," the New Testament was finished.

There was in the sixteenth century no language known as the German language. There were a number of widely divergent German dialects. A comparison of Fritz Reuter's Low German stories with Johann Peter Hebel's Alemanic poems will show how very much those dialects differ from one another even as late as the nineteenth century. Luther did not adopt any of the various dialects in vogue at that time. He chose the language used in the Saxon government offices, and also imitated by the imperial government and by several princes. In a certain way this was, even at that time, a connecting link between the Northern and Southern dialects. But a glance at the edicts of the emperors or the resolutions of the Diets shows how clumsy and stiff the language was. Luther divested it of its stiffness, awkward complicateness, and verbosity.

After his return to Wittenberg he spent several months with Melanchthon and others in a thorough revision of the work. Each sheet was handed to the printer as soon as finished, and in September, 1523, the whole New Testament was issued from the press. It had the simple title, "Das Newe Testament Deutzsch: Vittenberg;" without the names of either translator or printer. Luther did not wish that anybody should be prejudiced for or against

the book by his name, which was by this time well-nigh worshiped by some, execrated by others.

The sale of the book exceeded all expectations. The first edition of five thousand copies was sold in less than three months, in spite of the high price of nearly six dollars, according to the present market value of money. In some countries the sale was forbidden; the book was called by Roman theologians more harmful than the magical books of the Ephesians, mentioned in the Book of Acts (xix, 19). Dr. Emser, one of Luther's opponents, claimed to have found no less than 1,400 errors in the translation; but when he was requested to make a version of his own, he could not do better than to use Luther's rendering, simply conforming it to the text of the Vulgate. Luther rightfully said: "The papists steal my German, of which they knew little before. They do not thank me, however, but rather use it against me."

Of the impression made upon the common people we have the unbiased testimony of Cochläus, a contemporary champion of Romanism. He writes: "Luther's New Testament was so much multiplied and spread by printers that even tailors and shoemakers—nay, even women and ignorant persons, who could read but little—studied it with the greatest avidity as the fountain of truth. Some committed it to memory and carried it about in their bosoms. Within a few months such people deemed themselves so learned that they were not ashamed to dispute about the faith and the Gospel, not only with Catholic laymen, but even with priests and monks and Doctors of Divinity." How it influenced

the more cultured classes can best be seen by the poems of Hans Sachs and the pictures of Albrecht Dürer.

The New Testament had not left the press when Luther commenced translating the Old Testament. But now the greatest difficulties began. He called to his assistance the best scholars of his time: Melanchthon, of course; also Matthew Aurogallus, who was Professor of Hebrew in Wittenberg; John Förster, a pupil of Reuchlin; George Rörer; Bernhard Ziegler, afterwards Professor of Hebrew in Ansbach, of whom Luther wrote: "I greatly dislike to see him leave, since he is the most learned, most diligent, most pious, and most painstaking Hebrew scholar whom I know."

"Ach Gott!" he exclaimed, "how hard and laborious it is to compel the Hebrew writers to speak German! How they do resist and refuse to leave their Hebrew and imitate the barbaric German tongue! Just as if one tried to force the nightingale to leave her fine tune and imitate the cuckoo, whose tone she abhors."

To a friend he writes: "I openly confess that I took too much upon myself when I decided to translate the Old Testament. The Hebrew language is so unfamiliar that even the Jews do not know much about it. I thought that I knew a little something, and now I find that I do not even understand my own native tongue."

But the work progressed in spite of all the difficulties which had to be overcome. The Old Testament appeared in several parts. In 1523 the Pentateuch was printed, in 1524 the historical books

followed. The translation of the prophetic and poetical books was the hardest part of the whole work. Especially the Book of Job tried his patience to the utmost. "In four days Master Philippus, Aurogallus, and I could sometimes hardly finish three lines," he complains, and adds jokingly: "Old Job seems to endure our attempts at translation even less graciously than the consolations of his friends."

He spared no pains to make the version both accurate and popular. He wrote to a number of learned Humanists inquiring concerning the names of coins; he requested his friend Spalatin to study the jewels in the possession of the Elector, and to give him their exact names; he inquired of mechanics the correct designations of their tools; he even had a butcher kill a lamb and explain to him the proper terms for the various parts used in the sacrificial code of the ancient Hebrews.

Though accurate, his translation does not claim to be literal. "I wanted to speak German, not Latin nor Greek, when I began to translate. You can not expect to learn German by merely looking at the Latin letters; you must inquire of the mother in the house, of the children on the streets, of the common man in the market place. You have to watch their speech, how they express themselves, and then you may go ahead and translate. Then they will understand you, and it is plain to them that you address them in real German." Accordingly he substituted the current German designations for the Hebrew coins and measures and weights, and speaks of Heller and Groschen, of Elle, Mass, and Scheffel.

Was this a detriment? The man who, next to Luther, is the greatest genius Germany ever produced, the most potent factor in molding the German language of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Goethe, thinks not. Says he: "The fact is that this excellent man [Luther] has rendered in the vernacular, just as of one mold, a work written in a variety of styles, containing poetry, historical records, commands, admonitions, and has promoted the cause of religion more than if he had tried to imitate the peculiarities of the original in every detail." And Goethe confesses that he is dependent on Luther to find the right expression for the deepest emotions of the human soul.

Luther was not satisfied with the first word that occurred to him. "It sometimes happened that I looked and inquired a fortnight, even three to four weeks for a good word, without being able to find what I wanted." The following sentence touching the rendering of the angel's greeting to the Virgin Mary may illustrate his painstaking care: "Literally the words of the angel would have to be given, 'Mary full of graces.' But where do you hear a German use this expression? As soon as you say 'full' he will think of a barrel full of beer, or of a bag full of money. Therefore I translated, 'Du Holdselige.' If I had dared to use the very best German, I should have said, 'Gott grüsse dich, du liebe Maria!'—God greet thee, dear Mary. This is exactly what the angel meant to say, and this he would have said had he spoken in German. Everybody who speaks German knows how hearty and how fine these words sound, 'du liebe Maria.'"

At last the task was accomplished. In 1534 the whole Bible, including some of the apocryphal books, was printed.

The great work was finished, but its author never, as long as he lived, ceased revising and improving it. His first biographer, John Matthesius, gives a vivid description how Luther assembled the best scholars of his own university, and frequently invited guests from abroad. This "Sanhedrin" met once a week in his home. Each one had thoroughly studied the particular passage under discussion, and had consulted the Church Fathers and commentators; often one or the other of the company had asked the opinion of learned Jews or searched the comments of the rabbis. The Hebrew text, the Aramaic, the Greek, the Latin versions were compared, and the meaning of the passage was fully discussed before the rendering was finally settled upon.

New and revised editions appeared in 1541 and 1543, and the final standard edition in 1545.

Hans Lufft, Luther's printer, sold between the years 1534 and 1575 over one hundred thousand copies, an immense sale for those times. Besides, there were fifty-two reprints in other cities, there being no copyright. "He and other printers made fortunes, while Luther never asked nor received a copper for the greatest work of his life."

The same reasons which led to a revision of the English Bible induced the German scholars to revise Luther's work. In the city of Eisenach, under the shadow of the Wartburg, the representatives of the German State Churches resolved, in the year

1862, to intrust the work of revision to a commission of the best scholars of Germany. The result of their labors was published in 1883, and, after being on trial for a period of ten years, the final text was authorized in 1892 by the "Eisenach Church Conference." Slowly but surely this revised version is being adopted. It is good as far as it goes, but it is safe to say that Luther himself would not have been satisfied with it. He would have made more sweeping changes, and adapted it more to the language of the twentieth century.

Luther's Bible was the basis for most European versions. Even in the English Bible its influence can be traced. William Tyndale lived in Wittenberg from 1523 to 1526, and finished the translation of his English New Testament in Luther's university town. He knew the Reformer personally, and used as his most important helps the Vulgate and Luther's translation. Miles Coverdale, Tyndale's successor, published the whole English Bible in 1535 in Antwerp, and his work is based largely upon Tyndale and Luther.

One more item links the English-speaking world to Luther's great work. In the very first edition of his New Testament he had printed short prefaces to the several books. Of these the most comprehensive and important is the Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, written on the Wartburg. This Preface was translated into English and read quite extensively. It is well known that more than two hundred years later, on that memorable night of the 24th of May, 1738, in a society meeting in Aldersgate Street in London, while some one was

reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans at a quarter before nine, John Wesley felt his heart strangely warmed, and felt that he did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation. And it is of this scene, familiar to all who have read the history of Methodism, that Mr. Lecky, the historian of the eighteenth century, says, "It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the scene which took place at that humble meeting at Aldersgate Street forms an epoch in English history."

CHAPTER XIV.

CHECKING RELIGIOUS FANATICISM.

The large hall of the Black Bear Tavern in the city of Jena was filled with a motley crowd of guests on the afternoon of a rainy March day in the year 1522. A heavy thunderstorm had driven citizens and travelers from the streets, and many took refuge in the inn. Among the latest arrivals were two students from Switzerland who were on their way to the University of Wittenberg. Modestly they took chairs near the door, since their clothes were soaking wet from the heavy rain and their boots covered with mud. A knight, seated at one of the tables, noticed them, called them to his table, and treated them very cordially. To their astonishment he inquired about various schools and professors, and was evidently well acquainted with the leading scholars. They were still more amazed when they discovered that the book which he held in his hands was the Hebrew text of the Psalms.

Who could he be? They surmised that it was Knight von Sickingen; the host had a suspicion that it was Luther; but the mysterious stranger, who had requested the students to convey his greetings to Dr. Schurf in Wittenberg, upon being asked what name they should mention, smilingly replied, "Tell him he who is coming sends greetings."

A few days after, the two students called on Dr. Schurf in Wittenberg, and to their surprise they saw in his house the same knight. It was Dr. Martin Luther.

He had made a flying trip to his town some months before, but now he concluded that his permanent presence was necessary. Melanchthon had urged him to return; the City Council was desirous to have him back; affairs in the university and the city had taken such a turn that he felt duty bound to be personally present; and, consequently, in the face of dangers, Luther, excommunicated and under the ban of the emperor as he was, the well-meant warnings of the Elector to the contrary notwithstanding, left his quiet retreat and openly resumed his work as professor and preacher in Wittenberg.

From the mælstrom of world-politics in Worms he was suddenly transferred to the solitude of the Wartburg, and, again, from the quiet occupation of translating the New Testament he jumped, just as suddenly, into the turmoil and agitation of mob rule and religious fanaticism.

New ideas make minds free, but immature minds are apt to mistake liberty for license. Every step upward brings the mountain-climber nearer the summit, but it also makes the precipice, yawning at his side, deeper and more dangerous. Woe unto him if dizziness robs his eye of clearness, his foot of steadiness! Great changes in the moral or social conditions of peoples are always accompanied by unhealthy disturbances. The path to health seems to lead through the convulsions of acute

fever. Not only the noble traits are called into action, but bad instincts are likewise stirred up. There appear on the surface the more excitable, unsteady elements, also the baser and more violent. Those who are dissatisfied for any reason with the existing order of things, think the time has come to vent their feelings of discontent, even revenge; chronic and professional agitators are bred with astounding rapidity; minds are easily unbalanced; recklessness and foolish impetuosity are mistaken for zeal; old things are attacked needlessly and maliciously. "Down with the old!" is the war cry, while the new ideas have not sufficiently matured. Destructive forces are rampant, while the constructive factors are not yet at work.

When existing conditions of life have become antiquated; when political misgovernment, social wrongs, moral and religious defects are keenly felt and freely discussed; when times are pregnant with coming changes,—then rank enthusiasm easily usurps the place of sane discernment; then it is easy to be an agitator, but tremendously difficult to be a sane leader.

It never was very difficult to arouse the populace. The "psychological crowd" will follow the leader with irresistible force. Even under favorable conditions there is much truth in the warning cry of Erasmus, quoted in a previous chapter; but if the leader is a mere agitator, or if he loses his head, untold disaster is sure to follow. If he is weak, the crowd in its mad rush will overpower him, trample him down, and be plunged into destruction.

Luther had fought the pope and the whole Roman hierarchy; he had faced the emperor and the princes; but he had also aroused the masses. Now the crisis was upon him. He had to check the seemingly resistless forces which he himself had set free; he had to give the supreme proof of leadership by facing the masses and restraining them from perverting a reformation into a revolution.

Martin Luther possessed the moral courage to undertake it. He also had the common sense and the strength which are necessary to accomplish it.

During Luther's absence, Wittenberg had become a hotbed for all sorts of disturbances and radical movements. Outbreaks occurred in Erfurt and other cities. In the former place sixty houses belonging to the clergy were stormed and burned down within a few days; the inmates were compelled to flee for their lives. Trouble was brewing in Zwickau, the second city of the Electorate, situated near the Bohemian frontier. There arose prophets and dreamers among the cloth-weavers, who constituted the most numerous class of the inhabitants. They set aside the Bible and held themselves inspired by God; they proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of God in which all things were to be held in common, and they felt called by God to prepare the way by throwing down all opposition.

From Erfurt, from Zwickau, from Bohemia, and from other places, all sorts of religious cranks and fanatics flocked to Wittenberg, confident of their ability to assist the Reformers. Melanchthon did not know what to do; Karlstadt lost his head. His

ambition to take the first place in the reformatory movement asserted itself. Here was his chance, and he made the best of it. He precipitated radical changes. Mass was abolished; the altars were removed from the churches; the pictures were taken away and burned; the mass-robes of the priests were torn to pieces; communion was administered in both forms; it was even considered sinful to partake of the sacrament, when the cup was withheld from the people; confession preparatory to communion was done away with; monks were urged to abandon the monasteries; priests were importuned to get married; Karlstadt went so far as to teach that nobody could be a pastor unless he had a wife and children. He himself set a good example by taking a wife and celebrating his marriage with all possible publicity, inviting the whole town, even the Elector.

In a short time thirteen Augustinian monks left the convent. Some former monks and priests, among them men of unsavory reputation, married. On the streets of Wittenberg one could see men and women eat meat on Fridays; they thought this was an open confession of their faith. To a good many gospel liberty consisted in showing contempt for the existing forms of worship and in doing away, in the most radical and offensive manner, with everything that was heretofore held sacred. An Augustinian monk by name of Zwilling taught from the pulpit that no one wearing a monk's hood could be saved. He wanted all monks expelled and all convents demolished.

The zeal of the radicals was still more inflamed

by a number of Zwickau prophets, who came to Wittenberg. These self-styled prophets could neither read nor write, but they were full of the Holy Spirit and boasted of special revelations. There was really no more need of going to school or of teaching, since men arose who knew everything by immediate revelation. Professor Karlstadt advised his students to leave the lecture halls and become farmers, because farming was the only occupation which enjoyed the approval of the Holy Book. He himself bought a farm near Wittenberg, donned peasant's clothes, and assumed the name of "Brother Andrew." He did not, however, forget to draw regularly his salary as university professor. One of the school-teachers publicly warned the parents to keep the children away from school since God in His wisdom saw fit to save the world, not by man's wisdom. His advice was followed, and the empty schoolhouse was turned into a bread house for the poor. Professor Karlstadt quit studying. He was now frequently seen going to some ignorant tradesman or mechanic with his Bible under his arm, to inquire from him the meaning of some difficult passage; for it pleased God to reveal himself to the simple-minded.

Luther was kept informed of the developments in Wittenberg. He wrote a strong letter to Melanchthon, denouncing the prophets and disapproving the radical changes. He also wrote a tract, "Admonition to All Christians to Abstain from Riot and Sedition," but it was soon clear to him that nothing short of his personal presence could cope with the perilous situation.

He notified the Elector of his intention, but was bidden to remain in his concealment. In a very kind letter Frederick showed him the embarrassing position into which his return would place himself: the emperor and some of the princes would demand from him the execution of the ban, and he would not be able to protect him any longer.

This was very true. Luther was excommunicated; he was an outlaw. His only safety rested in his remaining in hiding. The only man willing and able to protect him was the Elector. What would happen if Frederick should withdraw his sheltering hand?

Luther had only one answer. "I am needed," he said, and remembering that, in order to reach Wittenberg he had to traverse the territory of his fiercest opponent, Duke George of Saxony, he added: "I shall go, even though it should rain Duke Georges for nine days in succession, each one of them fiercer than the original duke in Dresden."

"I am needed," he wrote to the Elector the night before he reached Wittenberg, in a letter which Professor De Wette calls "an admirable monument of lofty faith and noble courage." "I write this to apprise you that I am on my way to Wittenberg, protected by One who is higher than the Elector. I do not ask for the protection of the Elector; I even think that I can protect him better than he can protect me. Did I think that I had to put my trust in the Elector I should not come at all. The sword is powerless here. God alone must act without man's interference. He who has most faith will be the most powerful protector."

On March 6, 1522, he was back in Wittenberg. On the next day he stood in his pulpit. The garments of the knight were discarded; he wore again his accustomed hood.

For eight days in succession Martin Luther mounted his pulpit and preached his famous "Eight Sermons." Without exaggeration it may be said that Luther was at his best in delivering these sermons. Never before nor after did he show more strength mingled with moderation and forbearance, more decision and firmness mingled with tender love. These sermons have been called "models of effective popular eloquence." "Not one unkind word, not one unpleasant allusion escaped his lips. In plain, clear, strong, Scriptural language he refuted the errors without naming the errorists."

Christian liberty and Christian charity are the two leading thoughts of the sermons. Christians are free, not only from the tyranny of the papal Church, which would force the conscience into worshiping in certain strictly defined forms, but they must also be free from religious radicalism, which would force them to discard all forms. Certain matters must be left free, compulsion is unevangelical. We Christians need not merely faith and liberty, "we need charity, without which even faith availeth nothing," the preacher continued. "I see that you all know how to speak of faith and love. This is nothing remarkable. If it is even possible to teach an ass how to sing, should you not be able to learn that much, that you can repeat words and doctrines? But the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power and in deed. You need patience. You

can not do just what you think is right for you, but you must know how to waive your right and see what is good and expedient considering your brother."

"I should not have carried things as far as you have, had I been here. The thing itself is good, but your zeal was too impetuous. There are brothers and sisters on the other side, and they must be won over to us. Let your faith be firm, but your love be governed by the needs of your neighbor."

"Granted that some innovations are according to Scripture, they must be accomplished with due regard to law and order. If you had prayed earnestly to God and had brought your influence to bear upon the proper authorities, then you could rest assured that God's will is being done. It is out of place to overthrow even bad things in a disorderly manner."

"Summa summarum," the preacher ended: "I will preach, speak, write, but I will force no one; for faith must be voluntary. Take me as an example. I stood up against the pope, indulgences, and all papists, but without violence or uproar. I only preached, urged, and declared God's Word, nothing else. And yet, while I was asleep, or drinking Wittenberg beer with my Philip Melanchthon and Amsdorf, the Word inflicted greater injury on popery than prince or emperor ever did. I did nothing; the Word did everything. Had I appealed to force, all Germany might have been deluged with blood; yea, I might have kindled a conflict at Worms, so that the emperor would not have been safe. But what would have been the result? Ruin

and desolation of body and soul. I therefore kept quiet and gave the Word free course through the world. The Word is almighty and takes captive the hearts."

The immediate effects of these sermons was one of Luther's great triumphs. Order and peace were re-established. The prophets, convinced that Luther's piety was of an inferior order, left for more promising fields after the Reformer, in a private interview, had given them a piece of his mind. Karlstadt went to the little town of Orlamünde. His best days were a thing of the past. After leading a roaming life for some years he died of the plague. The other radicals asked for pardon and went about their business. Regular lectures were resumed in the university, and the students had to learn their lessons instead of attempting to solve the social and religious problems.

A number of Church ceremonies which Luther did not deem misleading or harmful, and to which the people were accustomed, were restored; only those parts of the service which were not compatible with evangelical truth were definitely abolished. Luther claimed that true liberty shows itself in tolerating non-essentials in order to spare the weak brother. Said he: "If alone, I can wield a naked sword as I please, but in a crowd I must beware lest by my carelessness I injure others." These concessions to the weaker consciences were to be gradually removed. People were to be educated to the use of their liberty, but they were not to be compelled. It was in perfect harmony with these liberal sentiments that he wrote to Spalatin to take

care that the Elector did not defile his hands with the blood of the Zwickau enthusiasts.

Naturally Luther was criticised severely on account of his moderation. Many called him a reactionary. Said one of them: "I do not care for those painted evangelists in Wittenberg; they only lead the people by the nose. We want prophets who do things."

There were certainly many problems to be solved and many innovations to be made which required utmost prudence on the part of the Reformer. The Elector, for instance, although Luther's friend and protector, was deeply attached to some of the ancient usages. The pride of his heart was the collection of sacred relics in the Castle Church in Wittenberg. In the year 1509 it numbered 5,005 pieces; in 1520 it had increased to 17,850 pieces. Every year on All-Saints' Day the people poured into the old church to view these relics. Thousands of private masses—9,901 in all—had to be read every year; they were paid for by pious persons, attracted by the precious relics. Luther could not keep silent. He more than once offended his aged prince by preaching against the worship of relics and against private masses, and begging of Frederick to reform this "Bethaven."

How was it possible, we may ask, that Luther remained undisturbed in the broad daylight of publicity? The answer is to be found in the political situation. At first the imperial government urged the Elector to execute the ban; the new pope, Hadrian VI, who succeeded Leo in January, 1522, sent letters and legates to Frederick and to the Diet of

Nürnberg. Frederick, as usual, took no decisive steps. Upon his request, Luther wrote a letter to him, stating that he had returned to Wittenberg against his sovereign's wish for the purpose of quelling the seditions and disorders. In view of his marked success, and considering the many signs of rising dissatisfaction and threatening revolution, the imperial government did not dare to molest him lest he might be driven over to the knights, who were preparing war against the Church and the princes, or to the peasants, who rose in arms against all existing order.

The situation was changed. The events which had occurred in the little town of Wittenberg convinced even the dull politicians, in whose hands the government of Germany rested, that there was but one man strong enough to check the dreaded revolutionary movements; and this man was Martin Luther.

CHAPTER XV.

AGAINST THE SOCIAL REVOLUTIONISTS.

The first decades of the sixteenth century were turbulent times. It was a period of transitions and of changing conditions. Social and political conditions which had lasted for centuries appeared like garments that had become too small. The growing youth feels how they pinch and sees how ill they fit; he is impatient to get rid of them, but his new suit is not quite finished; he does n't know how it will look; in fact, he does n't know whether he will have one at all.

The religious movement we call the German Reformation was by no means an isolated phenomenon. It was the most significant of a number of movements for greater freedom, and since it touched the most important phase of human life, the religious nature, it gave color and strength to the contemporaneous movements.

The old feudal system of the Middle Ages was slowly giving way to a new social structure reared on the basis of commerce and free citizenship. The discoveries and conquests of new continents had given an unprecedented rise to commerce as carried on by the citizens of the free cities. The citizens, heretofore of little significance in comparison

with the knights, rose into prominence. Owing to the changed mode of warfare it became evident that their wealth was of greater importance to the kings and princes than the strong castles and the heavy cuirasses of the knights.

The accumulation of wealth in the cities had as its concomitant a more luxurious mode of living. Unknown luxuries were imported and displayed by the wives and daughters of the wealthy burghers. The discovery of gold in America lessened the purchase value of money. While all these changes were taking place, the knights, whose position became more precarious every year, had no additional means of income to compete with the merchants, unless it was to appropriate the possessions of the Church organizations or to levy higher taxes on their peasants.

There was also a widespread and growing dissatisfaction among the peasants and laborers. They were looking for an opportunity to shake off the oppressive yoke of feudalism and of bond-servitude. Their position became nearly unbearable. The change from an agricultural to a monetary basis marks the beginning of our modern trusts. Companies were formed which bought up the necessities of life and raised the prices. The cost of living increased, wages did not increase. The citizens became overbearing towards the peasants, the knights grew more oppressive. Stories of untold riches, of whole mountains of gold which were discovered in the new countries beyond the seas, were circulated. "Walking delegates" stirred up the flames of discontent by dwelling upon the sufferings and

the wrongs of the poor. No one knew where these agitators came from; they appeared, scattered the seeds of sedition, left incendiary pamphlets, and were gone again. Leagues were formed and revolutions broke out here and there. They were immediately put down by force of arms, but the fire kept smoldering under the ashes. All that was necessary was to apply the torch to this mass of combustible material, and the whole civilized world was aflame.

The movements tending to a social revolution were entirely independent of Luther's work. A revolution would have broken out even if Martin Luther had never lived. But the impulses which he gave brought many latent powers into activity and hastened the consummation of the impending and unavoidable upheaval.

It was evident at the Diet of Worms that the party of the knights considered Luther a valuable ally. They were ready to introduce a religious plank into their platform. "Away from Rome! Down with the ecclesiastical princes!" was their political motto, and as it happened that their enemies were the foes of Luther and the Gospel, the knights added to their battle-cry the words, "For a free Gospel." When Franz von Sickingen actually commenced war against the princes, he gave to his army the motto, "Blessed death for the Gospel, or glorious victory!" and his horsemen wore emblazoned upon their coat-sleeves the words, "O Lord, Thy will be done!" They used Luther's name, and connected their cause with his.

In his "Address to the German Nobility" Luther

appealed to the princes and knights to liberate the nation from the foreign yoke. He was fully in harmony with the plan of compelling the ecclesiastical dignitaries to surrender their dominions, but held that this should be done by resolution of the Diet, in accordance with law and order. He discountenanced any and every revolutionary measure, and, therefore, refused to enter into an alliance with the political party of the knights.

The crushing defeat which Franz von Sickingen and his party suffered, naturally heightened Luther's precarious position for the time being. "The enemy of the emperor is defeated, next comes the enemy of the pope," was the cry raised by some princes. But they were prevented from executing the edict of Worms by the storms of the Peasants' War, which broke out with all the fury of elementary forces.

The knights were not the only ones who linked their cause with the cause of religion. The peasants did the same. Just as at the end of the eighteenth century the French Revolutionists, tired of bearing their misery any longer, persuaded themselves that they put into reality the beautiful motto, "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," which was advanced and explained by the philosophers, so at the beginning of the sixteenth century the German Revolutionists were inspired by the thought that they were to carry out into practical life Luther's great doctrine of the liberty of the Christian.

The common people had hitherto obeyed implicitly the laws of the Church as well as the laws of the secular rulers, without questioning the au-

thority of the lawgivers or the validity of the laws. They saw that Luther and his adherents made themselves free from the authority of the Church and declared her laws as not binding. How about the secular laws?

If men are made free by Christ, purchased by His blood, why should they be the bond-servants of men? If God's Word is to be the highest authority in religious matters, why not in social and civic matters likewise? If the Church was rotten and needed reform, why not the State? If the claims of the pope and the clergy were to be rejected because they contradicted the Scriptures, why should the unjust demands of the secular princes be heeded? If the common man is a priest and has the right to reform matters pertaining to worship and Church administration and privileges of the clergy, why should he not have equal right to reform matters pertaining to secular administration, to taxes, wages, and privileges of the landowners?

Social revolutionism and religious fanaticism formed a dangerous alliance. Luther's powerful personality had checked the tide of religious fanaticism in Wittenberg. But the fanatics were still alive, and their dreams and revelations found ready acceptance in other places. The religious radicals hoped that the swords and halberds of the peasants would speedily bring victory to their cause, the latter fondly imagined that the religionists would prove their demands as founded upon the Bible. And there were many who considered religious and civil liberty as necessary concomitants; others, es-

pecially former monks and priests, became easily unbalanced, and added to their religious radicalism the fury of social fanaticism. Many of them were mystics who dreamed about the signs and numbers of the Apocalypse, and spoke in glowing terms and in apocalyptic imagery of the approaching kingdom of God in which all misery and oppression was to cease. The time had come, according to their minds, when this kingdom was to be established, if need be, by force of arms, and the tyrants who stand in the way of the realization of God's plans must be strangled like mad dogs.

Among the most dangerous of this type of leaders was Thomas Münzer, who organized the cloth-weavers of Zwickau for the purpose of establishing the kingdom. He combined genuine sympathy with the misery of the submerged classes with unbounded fanaticism and hatred against Church, State, and society. Being a popular orator his passionate eloquence aroused the people wherever he appeared. "At it! at it, while the fire is hot! Keep your swords warm with blood!" he called to the miners in Luther's boyhood home.

In South Germany leagues and unions were formed, and twelve articles were drawn up, setting forth the demands of the peasantry. This document was a peculiar mixture of religious and political issues; it is an illustration of the ideas and ideals by which many minds were actuated. The articles were based on the Mosaic law and other Scripture passages, and demanded that no civil laws should be recognized as binding unless they could be proven from the Scriptures. The immediate ef-

fects of these articles were tremendous. They were regarded as the newly discovered law of God.

All eyes turned toward Luther. Would he give his support to the cause of civil liberty based upon religious liberty? It seemed as if he could not do anything else, especially since the opponents of the peasants were his foes and the enemies of the Gospel.

This was a critical juncture. The peasants' uprising was, as has been repeatedly stated by historians, the greatest social movement in the history of Germany; the Reformation, inaugurated by Luther, was the greatest religious movement since the days of the apostles. Luther was the man who had it in his hands to unite the two powerful forces.

What did he do?

He certainly was not lacking in patriotism. His "Address to the German Nobility" and other tracts prove this conclusively. Moreover, he knew that religious progress could not be isolated; its influence must be felt in the civic life of the nation. He certainly had a warm heart for the common people. He deeply sympathized and worked for the betterment of their condition.

But there were several weighty reasons which led him to keep aloof, nay, to oppose, the cause of the peasants. He was unalterably adverse to the use of force. Violent, revolutionary measures must, in his opinion, never be resorted to. The government is to him a divine institution; if those in authority misuse their power, God will punish them; but no Christian has a right to seek redress with his sword or halberd. Luther had such tre-

mendous faith in the transforming power of the Word of God that he was firmly convinced that the changes in the outward conditions would ensue in due time as the necessary results of the inner change in the souls of the individuals. The inner, spiritual change, the salvation of one's soul, was the matter of paramount interest. For any company of men to seek betterment of outward conditions, without having experienced in their souls the saving power of God, appeared to him useless, and in case violence was resorted to, it was reprehensible in the highest degree.

These considerations were the principles underlying his tract, "Exhortation to Peace Respecting the Twelve Articles." In the first part of this treatise he reproves in passionate language the princes and the nobility for the misuse of their power. They are to be blamed for the present sedition, since they obstinately fight against the Gospel and oppress the common people till they can no longer bear it. "You must give room to God's Word. If you do not yield out of your own free will, you will be compelled by defeats and distress. Even if those peasants should fail to humble and chastise you, others will not. God will punish you. The people can not and will not suffer your tyranny and wantonness much longer. God will tolerate it no longer. The world is no more what it formerly was, when you used to drive and chase the people like beasts of the field." To say that his teaching is the cause of the revolt is to blaspheme. Everybody must testify that he taught in all quietness, opposed rebellion, admonished the subjects to obey their rulers,

even those who were tyrannical. If God, in order to punish them, permits the devil through false prophets to incite the mob, it is surely not his fault.

It certainly can not be said that Luther defended the princes or had no eyes for the many wrongs they perpetrated. His language is as plain as language can be, and utterly fearless.

But he also turns to the peasants. He warns them not to call their league a "Christian" union. God has nothing to do with their undertaking. Wrongs perpetrated by those in authority are no excuse for rebellion. If the rulers refuse to do right, God will find a way to punish them, but Christians must always defend law and order against mob-rule, self-help, and anarchy. The revolutionists can not call upon God, since they rely exclusively on their own fists. The Christian way is to conquer evil by suffering and crying to God for help.

Before this tract was printed, the storm had broken forth; first in South Germany, then rapidly spreading toward the north. The primitive and animal fury, nourished by centuries of suffering, pent up so long a time, finally burst the valves and raged in full force. Deeds of unspeakable cruelty were committed. Those troops of infuriated peasants were worse than savage beasts. The leaders, such as they were, had lost all control over them. And yet they still thought they were executing the will of God; one of the troops called itself "the Army of God."

When the peasants and miners of Saxony began to rise, thereby embittering the last days of the

good Elector, who was dying in Torgau, Luther went to a number of villages, preaching and warning them to desist and not be misled by the tricks of demagogues. He writes that he was in the midst of rebellious crowds, and traveled among them, often being in danger of his life. "But the more I exhorted the plundering peasants, the more obstinate, the prouder, the madder they became."

Luther heard of unspeakable atrocities. He saw the smoke of burning castles and villages. The drunken and ferocious mob neared Wittenberg. His indignation was thoroughly aroused; he sat down and wrote what was no doubt the fiercest and most passionate treatise he ever penned, "Against the Murderous, Rioting Bands of Peasants." The peasants have deserved death on account of three sins. In the first place they have broken the oath of allegiance and have compelled others to do likewise. Next they are robbers and murderers; and, thirdly, they try to justify their knavery by the Bible. "Therefore flee from the peasants, whoever can, as from the devil himself; therefore, good lords, liberate, save, have compassion with the poor people, but do not hesitate to cut, knock down, and kill. This is a service of love, to save your neighbor from the bonds of the devil and of hell."

Retribution came quickly. The nobility rallied and defeated the poorly trained crowds of peasants. Now the tables were turned, and the noblemen gratified their revenge and rancor in a most beastly manner. With what measure the peasants meted, it was measured to them again, and they received good measure, pressed down, shaken together and over-

flowing. It is estimated that about one hundred thousand peasants lost their lives in this war, many of them after having been subjected to excruciating tortures.

Aside from the terrible cruelties inflicted upon the misled and helpless peasants, which stunned all Germany for the time being, it was clear that the cause of liberty had received a deadly blow.

It was not till after the defeat of the peasants that Luther's bloodthirsty pamphlet became generally known. His enemies were zealous in circulating it, and it caused a great outcry against him. Popular favor quickly changed into its opposite. But a short time ago the monk of Wittenberg was the idol of the common people, and now it seemed as if he had lost all his friends. And it seemed as if the Reformation could now effectually be crushed.

Luther was held responsible for all the misery of the fatal war, for the ruined castles, the devastated fields, the ravaged villages, and all the untold sufferings. Even Erasmus wrote, "Here you see the fruits of your spirit." The princes accused him of having incited the peasants; the latter reproached him for having forsaken them in their distress.

The Romanists thought the time had now come for carrying out the Edict of Worms which placed Luther and his adherents under the ban of the empire. Everywhere the evangelicals were persecuted. In the little country of Württemberg alone over forty preachers were hanged or burned at the stake. Dr. Emser and the other literary opponents of Luther wrote sarcastic tracts on "The Unmasked Beast, Luther;" the Humanists turned away from

him. Their quiet studies were disturbed too much; they were quite unable to improve their Latin style, write polite poetry, and philosophize when there was a revolution going on. And Elector Frederick the Wise, Luther's lifelong friend and protector, was dead.

The reactionary movement set in in good earnest and threatened to bury Martin Luther and his work.

The Peasants' War, like a blighting frost, chilled the hopes for a general reformatory movement among all classes of German society. It was not like a thunderstorm, purifying the atmosphere and bringing relief, but like a cyclone, leaving nothing but ruin and desolation in its path. "The aspect of Germany has never been more pitiful than it is now," complained Luther.

CHAPTER XVI.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE.

If there had been daily newspapers as early as 1525 the reporters in the city of Wittenberg would, on the eve of June 13, 1525, have found material for some highly sensational news. The papers of the following morning might have reported with glaring headlines the marriage of a runaway Bernardine nun to a former Augustinian monk. The monk was none other than Martin Luther. There were no newspapers at that time, nevertheless the news of the marriage spread rapidly, and caused everywhere no little sensation.

A great many of his friends were shocked and grieved. His intimate friend, the lawyer Schurf, exclaimed, "If this monk takes a wife, the whole world, even the devil, will laugh, and his whole work will come to nought." Melanchthon, who did not attend the marriage ceremony, poured out his heart in a long letter in the Greek language, complaining bitterly that "this man of God was roped in by some shrewd nun." The enemies of the Reformer were jubilant. Now, at last, the true character of the monk had come to light. His whole opposition against the Church sprang from impure, personal motives. His controlling passion was lust; he was carnal, fell in love, and wanted to have a wife. That was the whole secret of it.

This explanation of Luther's action has been adopted by Catholic writers generally, and is advanced even in our own days.

We must admit that the time which Luther chose for taking a wife furnished his opponents with arguments against him.

His prince and protector had died but a few weeks before. On May 5, 1525, Elector Frederick the Wise went to his rest after having received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in both forms and having declined extreme unction. He was the first German prince who, in his dying hour, was willing to rely upon faith in Christ alone, not upon the mediatory offices of the Church. Though he never had a personal meeting with Luther, he was the prudent protector of the bold monk, helping his cause more by his wise counsel and deliberate restraint than by rash measures.

Then, there were the disastrous results of the defeat of the peasants; the reaction against the Reformation. Luther's name was at that time cursed by thousands. All Germany was stricken and depressed. And Luther forgot everything else, and had time for courtship and merry-making! We can well imagine the righteous indignation of his pharisaical opponents.

Luther's marriage was an act as bold and as far-reaching in its ultimate results as anything he had done before. His disconcerted friends he cheers up with the words, "The angels will rejoice, and the devil shall weep." The motives which impelled him were the highest and purest. He simply considered it his duty to take a wife in order to show the high

and holy state of matrimony in the face of all who spoke sneeringly of it, and in order to discard the last monkish pretense of the superior holiness of the unmarried state. His marriage was meant to be a testimony against the popular doctrine of the inferiority and worthlessness of woman. By it he restored the dignity and honor of womanhood. To the Roman Church woman was the sole cause of the fall of man. The serpent was always pictured with a woman's head. To associate with women was dangerous, to marry a woman was proof of a low state of morality. At any rate she was too degenerate to become the wedded wife of a priest in the Church of God. A life of perfect holiness was considered utterly unattainable in wedlock.

In order to counteract these doctrines and the moral evils resulting therefrom, Luther had advised a number of priests to enter into matrimony; but in course of time he felt that he must not only preach but practice. A few years before, when Karlstadt and Justus Jonas had married, he wrote to Spalatin, "They won't force a wife on me," but he soon changed his mind. To the Elector Albrecht of Mainz he wrote a letter encouraging him to marry and change his bishopric into a temporal principality, and in this letter he declares: "If my own marriage should be an encouragement to your grace, I would be ready to set an example, since I intend to be in the married state before I depart this life, deeming this the state which God enjoins upon men."

Having once decided a matter, it was not his way to delay its execution. His choice fell upon

Katharina von Bora, a young lady of an old and highly honored but impoverished family. At the age of ten years she had been taken to the convent at Nimptsch, but in 1523, when twenty-four years old, she escaped together with eight other nuns, and came to Wittenberg. Luther was kept busy in finding suitable places for these and other nuns who escaped and took refuge in Wittenberg. He tried to secure for them places as teachers or to marry them to some honest fellow. He had a husband in view for Miss von Bora, but when Pastor Amsdorf informed her of it, she haughtily replied that she had no objections to marry either Amsdorf or Dr. Luther, but she did not wish the one proposed.

Luther, it seems, took the hint. Without consulting anybody he married her on June 13, 1525, in the presence of only a few of his most intimate friends, and on June 27th the public celebration was held. "If I had not married her quickly and quietly," he remarked later, "only a few friends knowing it, they all would have prevented it; for even my best friends cried, 'Not this one but some one else.'"

The newly married couple remained in the Augustinian convent. All the other monks had left it long before, Luther and the aged prior were the only ones who had been living there for some years. The convent was by no means a comfortable, much less a cozy home. It was built as a cloister for men, consisting of rows of small cells. But "Frau Käthe" succeeded in gradually converting the dismal convent into a cheerful home. The new Elector, John, made a present of the whole property to

Luther, and exempted it from all taxes. The university and the city of Wittenberg also showed their respect by giving substantial gifts.

There was not much romance in Luther's courtship, but his married life proved to be a very happy one. As the years passed by, the love of husband and wife grew stronger and deeper. He was fond of teasing her; in his letters he calls her all kinds of pet names. She had a mind of her own, and did not hesitate to carry out her ideas. Both were strong characters, and were accustomed to assert themselves, but their married life was permeated by the maxim which Luther enunciated in one of his Table Talks: "Man and wife must, above everything else, live together in love and harmony, so that the one shall endeavor to please the other heartily and faithfully."

Six children were born to them. Two of them died in infancy; the three sons became good, useful men, without, however, rising above mediocrity; the daughter married a prominent Saxon officer, but died shortly afterward. Luther's last male descendant died in the year 1759.

Luther spent much time with his family. He fully realized the duty of the parent towards the children. He remarks occasionally, "Rightfully we say that God has blessed us by the gift of a child, but how few of us will appreciate and understand this blessing!"

He was a close observer, was never tired of watching the children, of studying their characters and learning from them. Again and again he writes of their doings, and speaks of them in his

Table Talks. They teach him many spiritual truths, more particularly simplicity, purity, and confidence, and furnish a never-ceasing source of illustrations. To give them a good religious education was his prime object. "It does not matter whether we make our children heirs of great wealth; we should rather strive to make them wise, so that they can make good use of whatever they may inherit. We parents are great fools for leaving to our children many worldly goods but neglecting to train them in the fear of God, in self-discipline and honesty."

His method of education was guided by two maxims. Said he, "Christ, wishing to educate men, became a man, and if we wish to educate children we must become like children." And in the second place, thinking back no doubt of his own dreary childhood days, he demands that "the apple must lie next to the rod."

Luther did, indeed, become like a child among his children. He answered their childish questions appropriately, telling them stories, writing beautiful, childlike letters, when away from home, and never returning from a trip without bringing some small gifts. But he could also be severe when it was necessary. "I would rather have a dead son than one who has gone wrong," he said, and again, "How it spoils children if we let them have their own will and fail to punish them!" He believed in corporal punishment though not exclusively. Upon a certain occasion he punished his oldest son Hans by forbidding him to come into his father's presence until he had asked forgiveness.

The influence of the home life was, in his opin-

ion, of the greatest importance to the welfare of the country. We do well to-day to heed the following counsel: "If children are not trained to obedience in their own homes, it will never be brought about that a whole city, country, or kingdom will be governed well. Family government is the most fundamental government, whence all other forms of government originate. Where there is no good root, there can grow neither a good tree nor good fruits."

The high place which he accorded to the family life naturally led him to regard the home as the legitimate sphere of activity for woman. "Her calling is to be man's helpmate, to raise children, and to manage the house. If she would stay single and pursue some other line of work she could not, by doing so, be purer nor do more good than in the family." The work done by a faithful mother in her family, insignificant though it may seem, is of incalculable value. Her patience, painstaking endurance, and love can be surpassed only by God's love to mankind. Shortsighted and foolish is a wife who neglects her household duties to engage upon other work. His advice is: "Treat your husband in such a manner that he will be glad when, in returning, he sees the roof of his house; and, husband, live with your wife so that she does not like to see you go away, and is happy when you come home again." Another of his sayings, showing his practical common sense is: "The man is to be pitied whose wife does not know anything about the kitchen; this is the first misfortune from which many others follow."

Luther is far from underestimating woman's natural abilities, but he recognizes the difference in the constitution and endowments of the two sexes. He certainly emancipated woman from the degraded position she occupied in the Catholic Church, but he did not wish to emancipate her from the laws of nature and of God.

Woman, as well as man, is a priest before God, and it is her privilege likewise to offer up her talents, gifts, and powers as a sacrifice to God in the service of mankind. Besides the proper work in the realm of the family, there are two fields in particular open to women. They are the best teachers of the young, especially of girls, and Luther urged all Churches to employ good, pious women to instruct the girls under twelve years of age; and then women are peculiarly gifted to do the work which our modern deaconesses are doing. "Women who love the Lord, as a rule, have a special gift to comfort the afflicted and to soothe the pains of the sick." In exceptional cases, as for instance when there are only women present, he sees no objection to preaching by woman.

Woman's faithfulness is constantly praised by him. "Whenever and wherever women have received the truth of the Gospel, they are much stronger and more intense in their faith and hold it faster than men do."

The possibility of women earning their own bread and being independent of the support of the stronger sex did not occur to him. It was precluded by the social conditions of his time.

"Given to hospitality" might have been a fitting

motto for the Luther home. Martin Luther's family consisted not only of his wife and their own children. There was also his wife's aunt, known as Muhme Lene, who had likewise escaped from a convent; then there were three nieces and four sons of his brothers; and, after the ravages of the plague in 1527, he took several orphans and widows in his home. Besides, there were the tutors of his children and some of their pupils. One of the tutors brought day after day six pupils to take their meals at Frau Käthe's table.

Luther's home was for years a refuge for exiled priests, escaped monks, and evangelical preachers who were driven from their own homes. There was always a number of foreign students, professors, and preachers, drawn to Wittenberg by the desire to see the famous Reformer, as guests in the "Black Convent." Sometimes persons of high rank visited him. Some of the guests staid only a few days, others remained for weeks, and not many paid board-bills. More than once it was due only to Frau Käthe's positive objection that more transient or permanent guests were received than there was room to accommodate. When Prince George of Anhalt expressed his desire to visit Luther's home he was advised not to do so, since "Dr. Luther's house is inhabited by a motley crowd of young people, students, girls, widows, old men and women. There is, therefore, constantly great disturbance and no rest at all, and many feel sorry for the good man and venerable father."

In all parts of the Fatherland, yea, of Europe, Luther's house was known as a place of refuge for

those who were exiled, a hospital for the sick, a home for orphans, a place of solace for the afflicted.

His family was large and noisy enough to make any man nervous. But nervousness was not yet discovered at that time. In the midst of all the turmoil Luther fulfilled his manifold and exacting duties, wrote letters, pamphlets, books, prepared his sermons and daily lectures.

It is a mystery how Frau Käthe could manage her large household and feed so many persons with the limited income of her husband. His salary reached the enormous sum of two hundred florins a year; he did not charge tuition for his lectures, nor did he ever take a penny for any of his many books. It is clear that he could not live on his regular income. His Elector and other princely benefactors, among them the king of Denmark, supplied him regularly with table necessities, and on special occasions Luther felt free to ask for what he needed.

Very wisely he left the whole management to his good wife. She was a jewel in diligence, clear-headedness, economy, and shrewdness. His own liberality knew no bounds. "God is rich, He can afford it," he used to say. How he looked at riches can best be seen from the following words: "He who possesses earthly goods should be lord over them. Whoever serves is a slave; he does not possess the money, the money possesses him. He can not use it and help others as he would like to do; he dare not even touch it. But if he be master, the money serves him. If he sees one who has no coat, he commands: March, Mr. Florin; do you see that poor man without a coat? You must serve

him! Another is sick, and lacks the very necessities of life. Come out, Mr. Thaler! is the command; you must go and help this needy man. Those who use their money in this wise are lords; those who are constantly saving and adding to the pile are merely slaves."

Frau Käthe was by no means stingy. But she had an eye also for the needs of her own family. It happened more than once that her husband wanted to give away a precious piece of silverware, which some prince or nobleman had presented to the professor; but it had disappeared mysteriously; nobody had an idea where it was! Under her direction the large convent garden was cultivated, a few acres of farmland were rented, and in course of time "Herr Käthe," as Luther jokingly called his wife, managed a whole farm, owned cows and hogs and fish and fowl.

The term "family" was used by Luther in a still larger sense. It included all the servants. They were to look upon their masters as taking the places of the parents, and the latter assumed sacred duties when taking some one into the house, even if only a humble servant. "The head of a family is in his own house a pastor and a bishop over his servants. He ought to call his whole family, children and servants, together at least once a week, and examine them in the truths of the Catechism."

Luther was not gluttonous as his enemies decried him, but he enjoyed good appetite and relished a good meal. He was always temperate but no abstainer. Total abstinence from the use of beer or wine as beverages was not a question at issue in his

days. "If the Lord saw fit to create fine, large pikes and good Rhine wine, why should I not be allowed to eat and drink?" But, most of all, he enjoyed congenial company at table. His "Table Talks" were written down by some of the guests, and fill several volumes of his collected works. Quite frequently he and his guests were so intensely interested in conversation that it needed Frau Käthe's warning, "Why do you talk so much and forget to eat?"

His recreation he found in the family circle and among his friends, in playing with his children, in gardening, in bowling, but above all in music. Next to theology he placed music. "No other art can do for man what theology and music will accomplish, namely, to give rest and happiness to soul and mind." Music is the best medicine against sadness. Writing to a despondent friend he gives the following advice: "If the devil comes and tempts you with cares or evil thoughts, resist him courageously and say, 'Away, devil! I must now sing and play unto the Lord.' Play your lute and sing until the evil thoughts have left you."

Not all the days were bright. Quite often did sickness in the family cast dark clouds over the old convent. Luther himself had several painful and serious attacks of his old trouble, calculus. More than once the cholera visited Wittenberg. Two of his children he had to bury, and it was very hard for the affectionate parents; but even during the dark hours they remained in great peace of mind.

Luther's family life is the source of the new life and influence emanating from the evangelical par-

sonage. He put in place of the priest's house, with the smutty gossip encircling it, the healthful, uplifting influence of a pure Christian household. The story of the moral and social progress of the last few centuries can not be written without giving due credit to the work done by the sons and daughters of evangelical pastors, who received their early training and whose character was molded in the clean and pure atmosphere of their childhood homes. It was one of Luther's greatest deeds that he dared to marry and raise a family.

CHAPTER XVII.

ORGANIZING THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.

It is beyond dispute that Luther did not plan to organize a new Church. The Catholic Church had a perfect organization: all that Luther wished and worked for, at first, was a reformation of the existing Church and the severance of the German Church from the assumed authority of the pope in Rome. Quite against his will he became the founder of a new Church.

While not endowed with extraordinary gifts for organizing, yet by the sheer power of his personality he was looked upon as the one man who alone could control and bring order in the chaotic conditions which were the immediate results of the turning away from the old Church. He was equal to the occasion. His common sense, his knowledge of human nature, his devotion to what was ideal and desirable, coupled with the practical carrying out of what was possible under existing circumstances; his tremendous will-power; his unrestrained devotion to the cause, free from all self-seeking, were some of the qualities which went to make him the founder of the creed, the forms of worship, the government of one of the greatest denominations of the Protestant Church.

It is true Luther's Church was not a free Church

in a free State; it was a State Church. But Luther did not live in a free State, neither did he live in a time when liberty of conscience was enjoyed. Religious liberty, separation of Church and State were, in the sixteenth century, known as little as were radium or wireless telegraphy in the nineteenth century. We can never understand any man of the past or appreciate his life's work if we measure him by the standards of our own times and conditions. It shows a lack of proper historic sense to find fault with a man because he did things which we nowadays, under changed environments, should do differently. But it evinces likewise a lack of practical insight into the conditions of progress, slavishly to adhere to the work of a leader of the past, however beneficial it may have been, when conditions have changed entirely.

Luther's fundamental doctrines of the universal priesthood of the believer and of the freedom of the Christian contained the seeds of the magnificent tree of "a free Church in a free State," but the soil was not yet prepared to permit its growth.

According to his ideas the several congregations, consisting of true believers, were to have the right of choosing their own pastors and of managing their own affairs; but the disorders in Wittenberg during his absence and the anarchy of the peasants convinced him that the people in general were too immature, and must first be educated to the judicious use of their freedom. It was one of the most fatal results of the religious and social revolts of the years 1521 to 1525 that Luther became thoroughly disgusted with democracy in Church and

State. The people could not as yet be trusted; they must be held under strict surveillance. Thus while the logical result of Luther's teaching was greater freedom, he himself became the advocate of the autocratic government of the princes.

He also saw that if anything was to be done in the line of reforms it must be accomplished by the several princes in their own dominions, the imperial government being unwilling or inefficient to lend its hand. Moreover, according to Luther, it is the duty of the princes to use their authority in religious matters as well as in all other matters pertaining to the welfare of their subjects. He distinguishes between the Church as the invisible, mystic body of Christ and the Church as a visible institution. The latter is an organization for the purpose of promoting religion and morals among the people. As such it is an integral part of every Christian government. The care of the religious and moral interests of the people is as much the duty of the State as any other matter of public welfare.

Thus the prince was, by virtue of his position, to assume the place of a "Notbischof." He was to be the general superintendent or bishop in his dominion. This seemed to be, and probably was, the only way at that time to make room for the preaching of the Gospel, to insure the support, the protection, the rights and privileges necessary for the establishment of the evangelical faith. And this is the origin of the German State Churches. State Churchism was nothing but a makeshift required by the exigencies of the times. As a permanent insti-

tution it is not in harmony with Luther's fundamental doctrines.

The first question which arose in a generation raised in the belief that external forms of worship were divinely appointed and inviolable was with reference to the order of evangelical worship.

The center of the Catholic worship was the mass. This was the holy of holies. The priest, by virtue of his office did what no layman ever could do: namely, he changed the elements of the Eucharist into the very blood and body of Christ; he offered up again the body of Christ as a sacrifice. Luther retained the name of "mass," but he used this term to designate the principal Sunday service concluding with the communion. The preaching of the Gospel was made the center of the "mass," the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation was utterly rejected. Everything else was made subservient to preaching, and thus the whole service was intended for the instruction and edification of the congregation. As a matter of course, the use of the Latin language was abolished and the vernacular was introduced.

Acting upon the principle that everything in the ancient ritual not contrary to the Word of God may be retained, he drew up an elaborate ritual for use in the evangelical Churches. In this respect Luther differed widely from Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, and other Reformers. Repulsed by Catholic formalism, they went into the extreme of repudiating all liturgical forms and making public service as simple as possible. Luther laid the proper emphasis upon the inner, spiritual life, but he did not reject a rich

liturgy as long as those externals were not considered essential or made compulsory. Those who worship in the spirit do not need elaborate forms, Luther explained; but the great mass of the people is accustomed to forms, and by their symbolic language they can be made a distinct help for promoting devotion and leading to fellowship with God. At a time when external forms were objects of bitter contention he either passes them by in silence or warns not to abolish them by force nor to make them compulsory. Touching the question of gowns, for instance, he writes, "God is not more pleased with a clergyman who wears a gown, nor less pleased with one who wears no gown when administering the sacrament."

Besides the stated Sunday services, Luther encouraged the earnest Christians to meet in smaller groups for the purpose of reading together book after book of the Bible, the pastor giving running expositions of the passages read. We also find in his advices the beginning of Church discipline and of closer fellowship of the more serious-minded. Luther desires that the Gospel be preached to all the people without regard to the state of their spiritual life; but he is just as anxious to form select societies of those who are serious in their striving after righteousness. This excellent idea was lost sight of, owing to the close connection of Church and State; it was later revived in the meetings of the Pietists and the United Brethren in Germany and in the "Religious Societies" in England, and reached its culmination in the system of the Wesleyan class-meetings.

As a natural result of the doctrine of universal priesthood, episcopal ordination of priests was declared unnecessary. The candidates for the ministry were examined by Luther, afterward by a properly appointed commission, and were ordained before the assembled congregation by the laying on of hands by some elders. There was so great a demand in all parts of Germany for evangelical preachers that it was impossible to confine ordination to those who had received a thorough theological education. Teachers, sextons, mechanics, plain citizens, feeling called by God to preach the Gospel, were ordained and sent out. Luther did not even consider ordination as absolutely necessary in order to preach; he repeatedly urged Melanchthon to preach in Wittenberg, although he was not ordained nor called by any ecclesiastical authority. The Lutheran Churches fell far below this broad view of their founder, and developed a conception of the office and privileges of the ordained ministry, which comes perilously near the Catholic conception. It was not until the time of the Methodist revival that the validity and high efficiency of the lay ministry was recognized again, and it is but recently that the Lutheran Churches in the Fatherland are returning to the point of view of Luther, and, owing to a great extent to "English-American influences," employ the help of lay-workers in the various branches of Church work.

In 1542 the first evangelical bishop was ordained by Luther. It was his old friend and colleague, Nicolaus Amsdorf. Referring to this ordination, the Reformer wrote sarcastically: "The poor here-

tics committed a new crime; viz., they ordained a bishop without any ointment, also without butter, lard, bacon, tar, incense, coal; nothing but prayer and a sermon." In a pamphlet entitled, "Example to Ordain a Genuine Christian Bishop," he explained that the bishops in the ancient Church were ordained in the same manner. Later the designation "bishop" was changed to the official title "superintendent" or "general superintendent."

The problem of the financial support of the Churches and ministers was solved in a very simple way. The secular ruler, being the highest bishop in his dominion, had the right, it was claimed, summarily to dismiss clergymen who did not preach the Gospel, and to use the church buildings and the income of the Churches for the maintenance of evangelical preaching. It was argued that the existing Church had deviated from its original course and, consequently, foregone the right to claim the revenues. But a great many difficulties ensued. Many Churches were supported by bequests or foundations made for private masses and other ceremonies which now were held incompatible with evangelical preaching, and were abolished. Was it lawful to use these moneys for other purposes? In many cases the heirs of the original donors claimed the funds, or, at least, protested against the use of the funds for any purposes not specified in the will of the giver.

Furthermore, an increasing number of monasteries became almost deserted, as most of the monks left. What was to become of their landed possessions and their endowments? Knights and free

cities were ready to appropriate as much as they could of Church lands and privileges to their own use. Many poor noblemen, and even some princes, considered this a splendid chance to pay off their debts and to increase their scant income. It needed the strong arm of the government to prevent a general grab of Church lands and to retain them for the maintenance of evangelical Churches and schools, and it was Luther who urged speedy action.

Luther had visited a number of parishes as early as 1524, in order to learn what kind of preachers were administering to the spiritual needs of the congregations, and after the close of the Peasants' War a more thorough examination was made by a commission consisting of theologians and lawyers. They found that the spiritual destitution was greater by far than had been anticipated. There were pastors who had administered the Church rites either in Catholic or evangelical forms, just as the people preferred; one clergyman was found who could scarcely repeat the Lord's Prayer or the Apostles' Creed, but was renowned in the whole neighborhood as a successful exorciser of bad spirits. Some pastors earned their livings by rather questionable means, in some cases combining the calling of the ministry with the business of a tavern-keeper, even using the church building as wine-cellar.

Many former monks dropped the hood, but not the character of a monk, as Luther complains. They had quit observing the stated times of prayer required by the Church, but did not improve their time by study. "Good heavens!" he exclaims, "how much misery have I witnessed! The common people, especially in the country, know nothing of the

Christian truth, and, I am sorry to say, many pastors are utterly incompetent to teach or to preach. They all are Christians in name, they are baptized and partake of the communion, but they know neither the Lord's Prayer nor the Ten Commandments. They are living just like cattle and senseless hogs. Since the precious Gospel has come to them, they have learned wonderfully how to abuse Christian liberty."

Frequent visitations by experienced pastors who were sound in doctrine were instituted. The whole country was divided into six districts, and four visitors were assigned to each one. Melanchthon, Spalatin—the latter of whom gave up his position as confidential secretary to the Elector and became pastor in Altenburg—were especially active in this matter. Melanchthon prepared elaborate and thorough "Instructions for the Visitors," and Luther wrote a Preface to them. He laid stress on the necessity of genuine repentance; objected to mere polemics against Rome, and exhorted to preach the law as the revealed will of God, just as much as the Gospel.

In order to show the preachers how to preach, Luther wrote his famous Catechisms and published his "Postille," a collection of sermons to be read in churches. These books contain the substance of Lutheran theology. They may be said to form the theological groundwork of the Lutheran Church, the later Confessions stating in elaborate, theological terms what the Catechisms say in the language of the plain man. They will have to be considered more fully in a later chapter.

The Landgrave of Hesse organized the evangel-

ical Church in his dominion, other princes and some free cities followed, and steadily the work extended.

We do not for a moment forget that in some cases mere political opposition to Rome was the prime motive for introducing reformatory measures. In other places the work was greatly hampered by ignorance, indifference, insincerity, and other failings, which nobody was quicker to censure than Luther himself; and yet, after making allowance for all those influences, we see a mighty flame of revival fire spreading through all parts and sections of Germany.

It was not a revival in the popular modern sense of the word. There were no systematic efforts for the winning of souls, no special revival preaching, no invitations to awakened sinners; in short, none of the accessories of a modern revival. The simple preaching of the Gospel of salvation by faith, the dissemination of the evangelical writings of Luther, especially the distribution of the Bible in the vernacular, the testimonies of plain men and women, were the principal agencies used by the Spirit of God to awaken and quicken the spiritual life. The Lutheran Church is the outgrowth, not of a revival of the emotional type, but of a reaction against formalism and ecclesiasticism, based on a sane and thorough study of the Bible. Its chief characteristics are less emotional, but more intellectual. Its organization into a distinct State Church is due to the peculiar political conditions and to Luther's conviction that it is an important duty of the government, not only to protect the proclamation of the Gospel, but to devise ways and means to institute and permanently maintain it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

STRUGGLES FOR RECOGNITION.

How was it possible that a man, excommunicated by the pope and under the ban of the emperor, continued to maintain a position of commanding influence? Did the building up of a Church in direct opposition to the Roman Church take place without interference from either pope or emperor, especially in view of the fact that the danger of an internal revolution had passed, that knights and peasants were subdued, and peace reigned again within the borders of Germany? The question is perfectly natural; its answer lies in the fact that the emperor, as well as the pope, was kept busy with greater political schemes, and the former needed the good will and the assistance of the German princes. So it happened that for years the Edict of Worms remained a dead letter.

In 1526, however, the emperor defeated his most dangerous enemy, the King of France, in the decisive battle of Pavia, and now saw his way clear to re-establish religious union in Germany by coercing the dissenting princes to conform to the Catholic Church. He called for this purpose a Diet to be held in the city of Speyer. But just before the opening of the Diet, Pope Clement VII absolved the French king from his oath to keep peace, and

formed an alliance with him against Charles. To increase the difficulties of the emperor it was reported that the Turks were repelling the armies of the King of Hungary, and were advancing steadily up the river Danube toward Vienna. Again Charles saw that he could not afford to alienate the evangelical princes, and deferred the settlement of the religious question to a more opportune time.

The Diet of Speyer resolved that each prince should "so live, rule, and conduct himself as he could truly answer before God and His Imperial Majesty." In other words, each prince was left free to regulate the religious affairs in his own dominion according to his own good pleasure. This ended the dream of a National Church, and opened the way for the development of independent State Churches. It made possible the gradual organization of the Lutheran Churches as indicated in the previous chapter. Everybody knew that this decision was not final. Recognizing the need of being prepared for the coming struggle, both the Catholic and the evangelical princes were drawn closer together and thus the forming of a Catholic and of an evangelical party was only a question of time.

The pope's alliance with Francis proved fatal. In the month of May, 1527, the city of Rome was stormed and sacked by the troops of the emperor. Luther wrote triumphantly: "Rome is miserably devastated. Christ reigns. The emperor, while persecuting Luther to please the pope, is compelled, by vanquishing the pope, to please Luther. Everything must serve Christ in favor of his own and against his enemies."

We can appreciate the feelings of Luther. The victory of Charles, however, did not improve the prospects of the Reformation. Hardly had he concluded a favorable peace with his enemies when he turned again to the religious affairs of Germany. He called the second Diet of Speyer, and gave notice that he would "save no pains in order to oppose the pestilence of Lutheranism, and to bring back the erring members into the folds of the Church."

It was with dire forebodings that the evangelical princes and estates went to the old city on the Rhine. They realized that they were in a helpless minority. The Diet enjoined upon all estates strictly to execute the Edict of Worms; the evangelical estates were prohibited from continuing to introduce reforms or hindering any of their subjects to worship according to the rites of the Catholic Church, while the Catholic estates were in no way restrained from persecuting and condemning to exile their evangelical subjects. The evangelical party handed in a formal protest: "In matters pertaining to God's honor and our souls' salvation every one must stand and give an account of himself before God." Henceforth they were called by the name of Protestants.

It was evident that the Catholics were quietly preparing to crush the evangelicals; rumors of a league to that effect were current, and a forged copy of an alliance was sold to Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, who immediately took up arms. The forgery was proven, the war averted, but the suspicion remained.

Philip of Hesse was by far the most able statesman among the evangelicals. He saw the necessity

of a close union of all the enemies of the pope and of the House of Habsburg, and bent all his energies to bring about this alliance. While the Catholics formed a compact body, the evangelicals were split in various groups. Doctrinal dissensions prevented unity, political considerations made it absolutely necessary. Philip, looking at the matter from the point of view of a politician, trusted that, by a conference of the dissenting theologians, an understanding could easily be reached. So he invited the Wittenberg Reformers and also the leaders of the Reform movement in Switzerland, which was altogether independent from the German Reformation, to a colloquy to be held in Marburg.

During the first few days of the month of October, in 1529, the landgrave's commodious castle, overlooking the little city of Marburg, was filled with the distinguished leaders of the new faith. Luther, Melanchthon, Justus Jonas, Caspar Cruciger from Wittenberg, Zwingli, Collin, Œcolampadius from Switzerland, Butzer, Sturm, Hedio from Strassburg, Osiander from Nürnberg, Agricola from Augsburg, and others, were present to discuss the burning questions.

The interest centered in Luther and Zwingli. They were the leaders of the two opposing factions. If these men could be brought to agree among themselves, it meant to Philip not only religious harmony, it meant a united political party extending from the coast of the Baltic Sea to the Alps of Switzerland. But the landgrave underestimated the radical difference in the characters of the two men, the strength of dogmatic convictions, the tenacity and stubbornness of Luther.

It is difficult for us to understand how a seemingly trivial question of purely scholastic and metaphysical dogmatics could form an insurmountable difficulty to union, when harmony seemed to be necessary in order to avoid crushing defeat. But it did.

What, then, was the point at issue? Luther taught that with, under, and in the elements of the Eucharist Christ was literally present, and was bodily received by the communicant. To use the theological terms, Luther, while rejecting the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, firmly held the doctrine of consubstantiation. Zwingli saw in the Eucharist only a confession of the Church to the risen Christ and a memorial of his death. Luther taught: This *is* my body, *literatim* and *verbatim;* Zwingli said: This *means* my body, symbolically, as a remembrance. Luther wrote with chalk on the table before him the words, "*Hoc est corpus meum,*" and to those words he clung. He declared roundly and unqualifiedly that he knew the truth was on his side, and, though willing to hear the opposite opinions and refute them, he would not budge an inch from the letter of God's Word. For three days the disputation continued, then it was clear, even to the landgrave, that a prolongation would simply be a waste of time. Upon his request, fourteen articles were drawn up, on which all agreed; the fifteenth stated the difference in opinion.

When parting, Zwingli assured Luther that he always had been desirous of his friendship, and wished it now. He held out his hand to him.

Luther refusing to grasp the outstretched hand, curtly replied: "You have a different spirit. Ask God that He may convert you." Hearing this answer Œcolampadius lost patience, and said, "You had better ask Him also, for you need it just as much as we do."

Thus they parted. The breach in the ranks of the evangelicals was wider than ever. And it was widened still more by the acrimonious controversy which followed.

Many things might be said in explanation of Luther's action. Luther and Zwingli were radically different in character, education, environment. Zwingli was the son of a free people, accustomed to a democratic form of government. He was a Humanist, a statesman. Luther was raised under an absolute monarchy; from his youth he bore the yoke of strictest discipline. He was a theologian, a monk. Luther's work was the outcome of his individual struggles, Zwingli's was the result of the study of the Bible as the fountain spring of social righteousness. Luther started from the need of the individual, Zwingli from the need of society. Luther fought legal bondage and work-righteousness, and taught the freedom of the Christian; Zwingli fought idolatry and moral corruption, and proclaimed social and political independence. Says Professor Hausrath: "The son of the miner went down into the depths of his own soul to find God; the man born in the Alps climbed upon the peaks to study the doings of men, to organize their institutions and to govern them."

To the statesman and reformer Zwingli, dog-

matical subtilties were of less importance; to the mystic monk, whose mind had been trained for years in the subtlities of scholastic theology, who had been brooding in the seclusion of his cell, who, by firmly holding fast to what he experienced and what he found in the Bible, had won his battles against Rome, this metaphysical point seemed of utmost importance. He, from the beginning, made the fatal mistake of classifying Zwingli with Karlstadt and the other enthusiasts; and so intensely dogmatical was he that he could see no possibility of agreement. "Either you or we are the servants of Satan." His firm conviction was that the devil himself was at the bottom of Zwingli's opinions.

His relation to the Swiss Reformer is a sad page in the life of the great man. It is still more to be regretted, because the obstinate intellectualism and scholasticism which he displayed became an heirloom of Lutheran theologians of all later times, and made them, as a rule, as narrow, intolerant, bigoted, self-asserting, uncharitable as ever scholastic monks have been.

In the meanwhile Charles, having been crowned at last by the pope in Bologna, crossed the Alps to preside personally over the coming Diet to be held at Augsburg. The evangelicals were disheartened, but their hopes rose when they heard of the new victories of the Turks, of their steady advance, and of the boast of Suleiman soon to hear a Moslem sing his prayer from the tower of St. Stephen's cathedral in Vienna.

Elector John called Luther and the other Reformers to formulate Articles of Faith which might

be presented to the Diet. These articles formed the first draft of the constitution of the Lutheran Church. Accompanied by his counselors and his theologians, the Elector proceeded to Augsburg. Luther, still being under the ban of the emperor, was left at Koburg Castle, not very far from Augsburg.

Nearly six months he spent in solitude, in surroundings similar to those on the Wartburg. But what a difference between now and nine years ago! At Worms, whence he was taken to the Wartburg as to a place of refuge, he was a solitary man, summoned to revoke in the presence of the emperor and his princes; nine years later a Confession of Faith and a constitution of a Church were being prepared to be read before the same emperor and his princes, which expressed the faith of a growing number of princes and cities.

The work of writing the "Apologia," as the document was called at first—afterward its name was changed more appropriately to "Confessio"—was intrusted to Melanchthon. While expressing correctly the evangelical principles, Melanchthon endeavored to efface as much as possible the radical distinctions from Catholicism, and, unkindly enough, he emphasized the difference between the Lutherans and the "Sacramentarians" or Zwinglians; they were not recognized as brothers in the faith. The draft was sent to Luther, who returned it with the remark that he could not add nor change anything; "neither would it do, since I can not step as softly and gently." But before their final adoption the articles were changed again and again, the politi-

cians desiring to make the document acceptable to all parties.

At last, on June 25, 1530, the Confessio Augustana was read in an open session of the Diet. The hall was crowded. Many stood outside near the open door and windows. Two full hours the reading lasted. It was so plain that even those who were standing outside were able to understand every word. Every one listened attentively; only the emperor, who did not understand the German language, very soon fell asleep, and slept soundly to the end of the reading.

It was a great day for the Lutherans. "I am exceedingly glad to have lived to this hour, in which Christ was preached in so glorious a Confession," Luther wrote from his "Patmos." The Confession of the evangelical faith, clearly and definitely expressed, was read before the highest tribunal in the empire. And it was well received. The Catholic Duke of Bavaria remarked, "I see the Lutherans sit right in the Scriptures and the papists stand outside." Even the confessor of the emperor was so impressed with the depth and spirituality of this creed, that he said, "You have a theology that can be understood only by much prayer."

As a matter of course the Roman theologians at once composed a "Confutatio." All the old enemies of Luther—Drs. Eck, Wimpina, Cochläus, and others—were present, and between themselves they concocted a document the chief characteristics of which were weak arguments and strong abuses.

Again Melanchthon undertook the thankless work of writing a diplomatic answer which might

serve as a common basis, by yielding as much as possible to the opponents and accepting as much as possible from them, and covering up the remaining differences. Some feared that Melanchthon would "sell out to the Romanists;" many wished for Luther; "He would be better than all who are here." Luther kept in close touch with Augsburg by frequent messengers. He tried to put iron into Melanchthon's blood and strengthen him. "I hear that you undertook the queer job of uniting the pope and Luther," wrote the impatient Reformer to his friend; "but the pope, I presume, is not willing, and Luther objects emphatically. If you could succeed in this, I would take it upon myself to conciliate Christ and Belial."

Melanchthon's answer was presented to the emperor, but not accepted by him; the evangelicals declined to accept the "Confutation," and, tired of the fruitless efforts, some of them returned home. The final decision of the Diet was the renewed command to carry out the Edict of Worms. The recalcitrant estates were given time until April, 1531, to conform. On his way back, Melanchthon rewrote his "Refutation," and published it in Wittenberg under the title "Augsburg Apology." It is a brilliant explanation of the Augsburg Confession. Composed away from the council chambers of the politicians, under the influence of Luther, its whole tenor is firm and positive.

After all, Luther was right in his estimation of the Diet and its results. He watched the crows and other birds from his high tower on the Koburg, and compared their twittering to the discussions of the

Diet. To him both were of equal importance or rather insignificance. "I take little account of the fierce and menacing adversaries," he wrote to Melanchthon. The more the years passed by, the less faith he had in political plans and conferences. He had, however, unlimited faith in God, that in His own way He would protect the Gospel. To his thoughts on the Diet and its final resolution he gave vent in an unmistakable manner in two sarcastic pamphlets.

It is one thing to pass a resolution; it is quite a different thing to carry it out. The evangelical estates, fearing war in the immediate future, formed the League of Schmalkalden; but again the Turks came to the rescue, of course without their knowing it. Pressed by their victories, the emperor, in July, 1532, granted the "Peace of Nürnberg." A General Council was to be called, and till then both parties should keep peace.

Again efforts were made to unite the Lutherans and the Zwinglians, and this time they were more successful. Zwingli had died in the battle of Kappel in 1531, and Luther was a little more pliable. A formula was finally agreed upon, which satisfied Luther, and to which the Swiss theologians could also subscribe, and in the spring of 1536 the "Wittenberg Concordie" was signed. Luther was much milder than some years before at Marburg. He was convinced that his opponents acted in good faith, and that they, after all, agreed on the essential point that in some mysterious way Christ was present in the elements of the Eucharist, at least for the believer. "Let us now bury the past, and place

a heavy stone upon it," said Luther while shaking hands with Butzer and his companions.

Pope Paul III, after long delay, called a Council to Mantua in Italy. Luther advised all evangelicals to attend the Council, in order to give the Romanists no cause for complaint; but he did not think that the Council would ever meet and settle the difficulties. And it never did meet.

The pope sent one of his shrewdest legates, Cardinal Vergerius, to Germany, and although his instructions did not require it of him, he voluntarily sought an interview with Luther in Wittenberg. Arriving in the city of the "heretical beast," the cardinal sent a courteous invitation to the archheretic to dine with him. Luther sent for his barber, was shaved, put on his best garment and a heavy gold chain. "I must do all this," he remarked, laughingly, "so that I may appear young. The legate will then think: The devil! if Luther is still so young and has done so much mischief, what is he going to do yet?"

"But you will offend them," some one interjected. "That is exactly what I want to do. They have offended me enough. This is the way to treat serpents and foxes."

"During the whole meal I played the genuine Luther," the Reformer afterward reported. What he meant by this we may surmise from the reading of the legate's report to Rome. Vergerius was nearly beside himself with indignation over the "insolence of the Lutheran beast, who, with his wild eyes, is no doubt possessed by the devil."

The Council being appointed, the Elector in-

vited Luther to draw up a series of articles which must be asserted, and from which no departure should be made under any circumstances. He wrote the first draft of the so-called Schmalkald Articles.

The Council of Mantua did not materialize. In its place the Council of Trent was held, and there the Catholic Creed was set forth in contradistinction to the Lutheran Confessions.

It was not until a hundred years after the death of Luther that religious peace was permanently established. Devastating wars had to be waged and bloody battles had to be fought before this result was achieved. It was not till a generation after his death that the work of constructing the Lutheran Confessions was completed by the adoption of the "Form of Concord." But the foundations were laid firmly and strongly by Martin Luther. The whole succeeding history of the Lutheran Churches was the rearing up of an edifice according to the plans laid down in the Catechisms, the Augsburg Confession and Apology, written by Melanchthon, but on the basis of Luther's Schwabach and Torgau Articles, and in the Schmalkald Articles.

CHAPTER XIX.

"EIN FESTE BURG IST UNSER GOTT."

The history of the hymns of the Church is the key to the history of the spiritual life of the Church. Not to the history of her dissensions and divisions, nor of the building up of ecclesiastical organizations and forms of government. The hymns take us to the hidden sources whence spring the mighty rivers of faith and love and holy living. They are the interpreters of the inner spiritual life of the Holy Catholic Church of the living God. They express, in words full of rhythm and beauty and inspiration, those sweet and precious experiences which all the children of the one Heavenly Father are privileged to make, whatever their denominational relations happen to be, or however widely they may differ in the intellectual formulations of their beliefs.

The genuine Church hymn is not so much individual, but rather social in nature. It expresses not the individual experiences or sentiments as distinct from those of other individuals, but rather those vital experiences which are common to all believers, and therefore it can be understood and appreciated by Christians of all times and of all conditions of life. The peculiar quality of tone is given to each one by the individuality of its author, by his times and his environments; but they all join in one ma-

jestic chorus of praise and prayer, and their strains are carried upward in perfect symphony, thus fulfilling the Master's prayer, "That they may be one."

The German nation has been called a nation of thinkers and poets. Luther was a thinker; not one of those philosophers, to be sure, who live remote from the affairs of every-day life. He was intensely practical, a man of affairs, a leader of men. He had achieved unparalleled success, had become the best known man in Europe before he was forty years of age. It is interesting to note that, after he had reached his fortieth year, he developed an unusual poetical talent. In fact, he became one of the great poets of the nation of poets, and his contributions to hymnology have found their way into the hymnals of all branches of the Church universal.

Martin Luther was a nature thoroughly poetical. He possessed all the qualifications of a Christian poet—a mind easily and deeply stirred by noble thoughts; an eye open for everything that is beautiful; a devout heart, seeing God everywhere and feeling His presence constantly; a religious experience which vitalized his whole being; a deep and lasting inward peace; an exuberant joyfulness which could not be disturbed by sorrows and conflicts; glowing enthusiasm for everything that is heroic; a musical soul; a perfect mastery of language; a thorough knowledge of its effects upon men's minds. But his poetic genius was like a spring of water hidden in the rock. There was needed a rod to smite the rock.

While a student at Erfurt he was known among his fellow-students as "the philosopher." Although

he was always a lover of music, yet during his student days and while in the cloister cell, he was too much engaged with the serious question of his soul's salvation, of sin and guilt and future judgment, to find time to write poetry. Nor did he feel the impulse to pour out his doubts and his despair in verses. In the beginning of his battle against Rome he had no time to sing. His utterances were more like the roaring of the thunder and the striking of lightning. But now the time had come.

The execution by the Catholics of two young Augustinian monks, Heinrich Vos and Johann von Eschen, who were publicly burned at the stake in the market-place at Antwerp in the month of July, 1523, stirred Luther tremendously. Joy inexpressible filled his heart that God had given grace and strength to the first martyrs of the Reformation to die for the faith of the Gospel, and feelings of righteous wrath surged up from the very depths of his soul.

Joy and wrath were the rods that smote the rock; perhaps wrath even more than joy. He sat down and wrote a popular religious ballad describing the triumphant death of the young confessors:

"Ein neues Lied wir heben an
Das walt Gott unser Herre,
Zu singen, was Gott hat getan
Zu seinem Lob und Ehre."

It was immediately printed in pamphlet form and scattered broadcast.

His greatest distinction as poet he achieved, however, as a writer of Church hymns. He had

given to his people the Bible, the Catechism, an order of worship, but they had no hymns which could be sung by the congregation. The old Church hymns were read or chanted by the priest alone, and were not adapted to congregational singing. Here was a need. Luther saw it, and set out to supply it.

Consequently he wrote to Spalatin and others asking them to compose sacred hymns, especially to transcribe the Old Testament Psalms in German verse. He cautions them in the very first letter to avoid learned expressions and such as were used in court circles, and to speak as plainly as possible. His request is accompanied by the modest statement that he himself would be willing to follow the example of the prophets and the Church Fathers, and write German psalms for the people—that is to say, sacred hymns—in order that the Word of God might be brought to the people by means of song; but he feared that he was not endowed with the gift as much as was necessary for this undertaking.

But his efforts to induce others to meet the need were not successful, and Luther discovered that he himself was equal to the occasion.

For years he had studied the Psalms more than any other portion of the Bible. He had put his best efforts to the task of clothing those ancient hymns in an appropriate and dignified German garb. He succeeded as no one else did, either before his time or after. Now he expanded the thoughts of the psalmist, born again and brought to life in his own experience, and expressed them in pure and beautiful German poetry. The result was his immortal hymns.

Luther's poetry was not the product of his leisure hours; it was no pastime, no recreation; it was part of his serious and hard work in the service of his people. Looking at his hymns in this light, and taking into consideration Luther's whole character, we can understand the underlying significance of the fact to which Wilhelm Scherer, the eminent German literary critic, calls attention; viz., that there is in Luther's hymns a distinctively manly tone as it was never before heard in German lyric poetry.

The year 1524 may be called the birth year of the evangelical Church hymn. In that year appeared Luther's first hymnal. It contained only eight hymns, and four of them were of Luther's own composition. He published two more hymnals in the course of the same year, the last one, the "Geistliches Gesangbuch," containing thirty-two hymns, of which twenty-four were written by Luther himself. In that one year he wrote those twenty-four hymns, while in the succeeding twenty-two years of his life he added only twelve more to the list.

The earliest hymn is the one commencing:

"Nun freut euch lieben Christen Gemein."

It is a clear presentation of the way of salvation, really an account of his own struggles and his transition from darkness into light. It is claimed by Lutheran writers that by this one hymn hundreds of Catholics were led to an experimental faith in Christ, many of them bitter enemies of the "heretic" who, before, could not even endure the name of

Luther. Psalm cxxx is the basis for the beautiful hymn:

"Aus tiefer Not Schrei ich zu Dir;"

Psalm xii for:

"Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein."

Psalms lxvii, cxxiv, xviii, cxxviii were likewise rendered in German poetry. But best known among all his hymns is his grand

"Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott."

The occasion of its origin is somewhat doubtful. Some think of the time during the Diet of Worms; but the hymn is nowhere found before the year 1529. Many are inclined to the view that he wrote it at Koburg Castle at the time of the Diet of Augsburg; but it is found in print a year before that time. It probably originated during the troublesome and anxious weeks before or during the Diet of Speyer, when Luther was afflicted with sickness and mental dejection, when the Catholic princes formed an alliance, and the chances for the evangelical party were more than doubtful. Amidst all the discouragements, disappointments, and anxieties, Luther looks up to the mighty God who is the refuge of his people. He feeds upon Psalm xlvi,

"God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble,"

and he pours out his confidence and trust in the

words which we quote in the excellent translation of Frederick H. Hedge:

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing:
Our helper He, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe:
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth is His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed,
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers—
No thanks to them—abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also.
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever."

This hymn was the war-cry and the triumphal song of the Reformation. Everything that made Protestantism great and courageous finds expression in these magnificent verses.

Besides Psalms, Luther translated and adapted Latin songs of the mediæval Church, one hymn of John Huss, and also "converted" well-known German songs, as, for instance, the famous Christmas song:

"Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her."

He took great pains in selecting appropriate tunes for his hymns. With the assistance of competent musicians he chose the best of the existing tunes, both secular and sacred, and arranged them to suit his purposes. His selections and adaptations were excellent. Again he proved himself the master in understanding the needs and likes of the people. Without catering to depraved tastes and giving his people rag-time melodies, he set his hymns to tunes which were popular but also dignified and elevating.

Little wonder that his hymns were soon known by heart and sung everywhere. Some of them were printed on slips of paper and had an immense circulation. Of the first hymnals no copies are extant. They were not stored up in libraries, but were used in the homes, and were actually used up by the people. They became one of the most successful means of spreading evangelical truth, and Luther's opponents complained that the people simply sang themselves into the new faith.

In the city of Brunswick a Romish priest preached a fierce sermon against the arch-heretic,

He had hardly finished when a plain man in the audience started Luther's hymn, "Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein." It was immediately taken up and sung by the whole crowd, much to the discomfiture of the preacher.

Even in Catholic Churches some of the hymns were sung. The people wanted to hear them. Prince Henry of Wolfenbüttel, than whom none was more bitter against Luther, insisted that his hymns should be sung regularly in his court chapel. One day the priest objected, and, when asked to name the hymns which were to be excluded, commenced with: "Es soll uns Gott genädig sein"—May God be gracious unto us. "What!" interrupted the prince, "do you want us to quit praying that God may be gracious unto us? Should we perhaps sing, May the devil be gracious unto us?"

Luther again had led the way. Many followed in his steps. The great revival caused an outburst of sacred song. Paul Speratus, Justus Jonas, Agricola, Nicolaus Decius, and others, gave to the Church hymns which still are quickening her faith.

The Gospel message, with its accompanying joy and peace, was the mother of the sacred hymn, the open Bible the immediate source of the hymnal. The chills of winter had passed; spring had come with all its warmth and light and life, with its budding trees and blooming flowers; the nightingale lifted up her voice, and was soon joined by a chorus of birds singing the praises of their Maker. "Luther's Bible read in the homes, Luther's Catechisms studied in the school, Luther's hymns sung in the church and on the street, were the three great factors in the making of evangelical Germany."

CHAPTER XX.

THE EDUCATOR.

It is Melanchthon who is known as the "Præceptor Germaniæ," and rightly so. He was himself a master teacher, and he trained excellent teachers for the higher schools and universities of Germany which he had organized. But it is Martin Luther who is the real founder of modern education.

Mediæval education was purely religious and dogmatic. The teachers were clergymen. The great aim of higher education was to train theologians; the chief end of general education, as far as it went, was to prepare people for heaven by making them obedient to the Church. The theology of the Church as formulated in her creeds was identified with absolute truth, at least it was authoritative. The function of the teacher was to inculcate the doctrines of the Church; the work of the scholar consisted in expounding and defending the dogma.

Modern education is secular and scientific. In our schools we prepare the pupils for the present life, for ministering to the needs of society. We do so, not by handing down formulated truths, but by training the intellect to discover truth by close observation and penetrating research. Modern civilization is the product of scientific research. Search for truth is not possible when the truth has

been finally and authoritatively formulated. By attacking the claim of the mediæval Church to possess the whole truth in her creeds, Luther opened the way to rational, critical observation, to truly scientific research, and to independent thought.

The mediæval Church considered the whole wide field of secular activities as essentially evil. Nature, with all her riches and wonders, was opposed to God. The arts, if not subservient to the Church, were inspired by the devil; human intellect, when not in slavish submission to the dogma, was dangerous. Luther liberated mankind from this unworthy servitude, and taught us again to look upon all creation as God's handiwork. He showed us that we, as free children of God, are masters of our Father's works. Says Goethe: "We do not fully appreciate how much we owe to Luther and the Reformation. We were made free from the shackles of intellectual restraint, and we have again the courage to stand with both feet upon God's earth, and to recognize human nature as something created and endowed by God."

The Renaissance was a reaction against dogmatic narrowness, fanaticism, and tyranny. The Humanists were the champions of secular learning and of pure, independent scholarship. But they discarded religion altogether, and, unwilling openly to defy the Church, they either led a life of despicable hypocrisy, like Pope Leo and Cardinal Albrecht, and many other dignitaries who were devoted Humanists and at the same time enjoyed the emoluments of their Church positions, or they were wearing their strength away in unsatisfactory com-

promises with the ecclesiastical authorities, as Erasmus of Rotterdam, Reuchlin, and others, were compelled to do. Besides, their endeavors were not directed to advance popular education as a means for the uplifting of the common people. As to the Greeks of old, learning was to them an æsthetical luxury, to be reserved for the few favored ones.

It was Luther who stood for the close correlation of religion and learning. He dealt the deathblow to Church authority in all secular matters, but he did not divorce religion from secular learning. Religion and morals are inseparably connected, and must be woven into the whole fabric of popular and higher education in order to train pious and useful citizens. The sum and substance of Luther's ethical teaching was, that he serves God best who does his full duty in whatever position he has been placed by God. But in order to do his full duty, a man must develop the powers which God has given to him. All learning, separate from application to the best interests of mankind, appears to him nothing but waste of time; but as a means of serving the community and thereby serving God, it is of highest importance.

Thus Luther becomes the champion of popular education. In his "Address to the German Nobility" he emphasizes the importance of schools for all classes of people, and later he wrote two treatises dealing especially with the question of common schools; namely, in the year 1524 the "Address to the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany, to Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," and in 1530, while in Koburg, "Why Children Should go to

School." In these pamphlets he lays the foundation of modern popular education. The historian, Leopold von Ranke, is perfectly right in saying that they "have done as much for the development of secular instruction as his 'Address to the German Nobility' has done for the secular State in general."

There are to be, according to his plan, three grades of schools. The lower schools are to be open to all the children, to boys as well as to girls. Girls must also have the benefit of elementary instruction, which is to be imparted to them preferably by women teachers. Boys who graduate creditably, and are bright and promising, should enter the higher schools or gymnasia, and those who desire to enter upon a profession are to receive their professional training at the universities after graduating from a gymnasium. Here we have our plan of grammar schools, high schools and colleges, and professional schools.

The schools are to be established and maintained by the cities, "since the princes, who by rights ought to do it, spend their time in senseless diversions and gluttony." The community must provide for public instruction, since the schools are not only for preachers or for the benefit of the Church, but are necessary to the people, and since the task of instructing the children can not be left to the parents because many of them do not see the necessity, others are careless, others dishonest, and most of them are incompetent to teach.

"Every year we spend much money on roads and walls and fortifications and on other public improvements, in order to secure peace and prosperity

for the city. Ought we not to spend at least as much on the education of our children?"

"The growth of cities does not consist merely in building fine houses, in strengthening the fortifications, in gathering wealth; their real growth, peace, and strength lies in the bringing up of many fine, skilled, sensible, honest, well-educated citizens. They alone can not only amass riches, but use them profitably for the community."

Those who have the means may pay for the schooling of their children. "People ought to give at least half as much now for the education of their children as they formerly contributed for the support of the begging friars and the bishops;" but "if there be among the orphans or among the children of the poor bright boys, they ought to be sent to school at the expense of the community." Lack of means ought never to be a hindrance when a boy has natural gifts. Luther always has a word of encouragement for the poor students. "Do n't despise the poor students, who sing in front of your houses," he admonishes the citizens. "I myself was one of them. Let your son study even if he have to beg for his bread. You give to the Lord a fine piece of wood; He can carve a useful man out of it."

It was the more necessary to lay stress upon the value of a liberal education, inasmuch as the prevalent opinion was, that education was of importance only for ecclesiastics, and especially since the rapid increase of commerce turned the attention of the citizens almost exclusively to practical business affairs. The higher studies were neglected in favor of acquiring skill to make money. We almost imag-

ine we hear a modern college professor when we listen to Luther's words: "Do not pay attention to the spirit of gain and greed that despises the liberal arts and says to you, 'If a boy knows how to read and write German, and knows his multiplication table, he knows enough. He shall be a business man.' They will soon come to their senses and fain dig a scholar out of the earth, if they only could. How can the merchant get along without the preacher or the lawyer? If there were no preachers, there would soon be no Word of God, and people would turn heathen; and if there were no lawyers, there would be no justice and no peace, nothing but robbery, murder, wrong, main force."

Luther never tired of magnifying the vocation and work of the teacher. "An efficient, pious schoolteacher can not be honored enough nor receive too much compensation. It is a shame how we undervalue the work of the teacher. If I could give up preaching, or were compelled to quit, I would not wish to be anything else than a schoolteacher; for I know this vocation is the best and the most useful next to the ministry; and sometimes I do n't know which of the two is the more important. For it is difficult to train old dogs or to reform old sinners, and this is what the preacher tries to do, and so often in vain; but young trees can be bent, even if some of them should break."

In the course of study Luther desires to include everything that is useful and beautiful. "I am not of the opinion that the Gospel puts down and abolishes all arts, as some who are over-spiritual pretend. I wish to see all the arts, particularly music,

in the service of Him who created them and gave them to us." He therefore requires that teachers should be able to sing. The young people ought to be trained in music, especially in singing, "so that they may love songs, not carnal songs, but something good and useful."

Next to the elementary studies he places in importance the study of history, on account of its moral influence and practical bearing. Children "learn from history what to do and what to avoid in this life. They become prudent and clever, and are able to give sound advice to others, and even to rule over others."

Mental occupation is not to alienate the children from manual labor. "My idea is that the boys should go to school one or two hours every day; the rest of the time they may do work at home, or learn a trade. Girls can well be spared from home for one hour a day in order to go to school. They have ample time to do all their housework in the meantime." Those who are especially gifted and bid fair to become teachers or preachers or follow some other profession must spend more time in study, and finally devote their whole time to it. From this plan of Luther's it is really but one step to the instruction in manual work for boys, and in cooking, sewing, and other household duties for girls; but it took a long time before this step was taken, and even now the majority of schools, perhaps, are lagging behind in this respect.

Luther did not believe in the theory of "all work and no play." The teachers must strive to make the school hours pleasant for the children, so that

they may learn "with pleasure and, as it were, while playing." "Children are bound to run and jump and do things which are a delight to them. We must not always restrain them. It is not good constantly to repress them."

As a means of disseminating useful knowledge among young and old he strongly recommends the establishment of public libraries.

His common sense led him to ridicule the idea of some impractical scholars who wanted to introduce the study of Greek and Hebrew into the grammar schools, but he asserted most emphatically the necessity of the study of the ancient languages for all students of theology. "The ancient languages are the sheath in which the sword of the Spirit is hidden; they are the casket in which the jewel is lying; they are the vessel in which the drink is contained; they are the cupboard in which this meat is placed; they are the baskets in which the bread and fish crumbs are carried. . . . A plain preacher with his German Bible in his hands is able to understand Christ, to preach Him, and to live a holy life; but without the languages he can not expound the Scriptures nor defend them against errors."

Since Luther delegated to the State the duty of caring for religious instruction, it is perfectly natural that he should insist on religious instruction in the schools. State Church system and compulsory religious instruction in the public schools are natural and necessary concomitants. One day in each week was to be given to religion. The children were to commit selected portions of the Bible, and the teacher was to instruct them in Bible history

and in the truths of Christian religion. Religious instruction remains to the present time an essential part of the courses in all State schools in European countries.

The most important text-book was Luther's Catechism. He wrote two. The "Larger Catechism" was really a guide-book for preachers. It is a popular compendium of the whole body of evangelical divinity. The "Smaller Catechism" was the text-book for schools and private instruction. In a limited number of questions and answers Luther stated succinctly and in systematic arrangement the most essential parts of the Christian religion. It was the result of many years of study. Luther had a large blackboard in his own room, where he wrote out the questions and answers as briefly and clearly as possible. Testing them again and again in his own family, he continued to condense and improve them, and thus prepared the little book, "which can be bought for six pennies but which could not be paid for by six thousand worlds," as Justus Jonas tells us. Another contemporary of the Reformer estimates that, during the first thirty years after its publication, at least one hundred thousand copies were sold, and he gives his opinion of the value of the book in the following words: "If Luther in his whole life had done nothing else than bring his two Catechisms into the homes, schools, and pulpits, the whole world could not repay him sufficiently for the good which he thereby accomplished."

We may consider these praises extravagant; but, as a matter of fact, Luther's Catechisms have done

more than anything else to train and retain the young people of Lutheran descent in the faith and in the Church of their fathers. They are translated into all languages in which Lutheran preachers proclaim the Gospel. They are used as text-books today as they were used three hundred years ago. More than one hundred thousand copies in seven different languages are in use at the present day in the Lutheran Churches in the United States.

A good many objections may be raised against catechetical instruction. It is dry, barren, does not promote spiritual life, substitutes dogma for the study of the Bible at first hand. Admitting the truth of all this, yet we may truly say that Luther's conception systematically and constantly to train children in the truths of religion is right. The methods may change in accordance with the improved methods of child training, the principle remains. Catechetical instruction without spiritual life may develop dead formalism; but it is equally true that dramatic conversions without Christian nurture generate an unsteady, emotional type of Christian life, which fails to develop into a full-orbed Christian character. Sound and thorough instruction combined with personal consecration to God forms the foundation of a consistent Christian character. Both are needed.

Present indications are that the American Churches are waking up to the fact that it is poor policy to rely too much on spasmodic, emotional revivals to bring the young people to an experimental knowledge of Christ; they will in the future pay more attention to systematic instruction, not in dead

dogmas, but in vital verities. And present indications point also to the fact that the American people will realize more than heretofore that purely secular education may produce strong and well-trained intellects, but that the highest interests of our nation demand men of sterling character, of pure honesty, of unmitigated unselfishness. Education in religion and morals blended with intellectual training can alone produce such men.

This is the way which was pointed out by Luther. The sooner we decide to follow him, the better it will be for the American people.

CHAPTER XXI.

PREACHER AND WRITER.

While Luther preached very often in Wittenberg as well as in other cities, and sometimes to large audiences, he reached still more people by means of printer's ink than by the spoken word. He was the first preacher to use the printing-press extensively for the purpose of promulgating his opinions. Both the quantity of his writings and the immense circulation would be remarkable even in our time, much more so three hundred years ago when the art of printing was still in its infancy.

The first edition of his collected works, commenced in 1539 and finished twelve years after his death in 1558, numbers twelve large volumes in the German language and seven volumes in Latin. But these nineteen folio volumes contain only the smallest portion of his literary work. The two modern editions, the so-called Erlangen Edition, published from 1862-1885, fills sixty-seven large octavo volumes of German and thirty-eight volumes of Latin writings. Even this edition is far from being complete. During the last few years a number of unpublished letters and sermons, most of the latter taken down by students, have come to light in various archives and libraries of German cities. The latest edition, which is to contain all the works of the great Reformer in their chronological order,

is being edited by an official commission of German scholars under the auspices of the government. This so-called Weimar Edition is progressing slowly, and numbers at present thirty-two volumes. Luther's works comprise sermons, letters, controversial writings, tracts for the times, commentaries, books of devotion, theological discussions, thus presenting a great variety and range of subjects.

Bearing in mind that he fulfilled regularly the duties incumbent upon his position as a university professor, we may well marvel at the number of sermons which he preached. For years he filled every Sunday the pulpit in the Wittenberg Stadt-Kirche, besides conducting regular Sunday services with the monks and in later years with his family, his "Hausgemeinde," as he called it, which included all the guests and servants. Very frequently he was called out of town to preach on special occasions, and not many trips did he make without being called upon to expound the Word of God.

In most places the people were eager to hear him. When reaching Orlamünde during the troubles occasioned by Karlstadt, the whole populace was in the fields harvesting, but they left their work and assembled in the church. At Zwickau, where he went shortly after returning from the Wartburg in order to counteract the influence of the fanatical prophets, an immense concourse of people flocked to hear him. He preached from a window in the city hall to over twenty-five thousand people who crowded the market-place, and a little later he addressed an audience that filled the castle court.

In Wittenberg he, as a rule, preached expository sermons on whole Biblical books, his favorite books being Genesis and the first Epistle of St. Peter. While fully persuaded that the chief aim of preaching was to acquaint the congregation with the truths of the Bible, and more especially to set forth Christ in his various offices, he did not consider it unseemly to treat vital problems of the day in his sermons. Most famous in this respect are his "Eight Sermons," preached after the return from the Wartburg, in which he reviewed the whole religious and political situation. A number of his political and social pamphlets are really the substance of sermons which he preached on those questions.

Most of the sermons which appeared in print were taken down by interested hearers. He seldom took the time to revise the manuscripts; frequently they were printed without his consent. There being at that time no copyright, his sermons, as well as his other publications, were often reprinted in other cities, notably in Nürnberg, Basel, Strassburg. While the sermons were published mostly in pamphlet form, there appeared also some collections of sermons. Of special importance are his "Haus-Postille," consisting of sermons preached on Sunday mornings to his own family and taken down by his friend George Rörer, and his "Kirchen-Postille." This latter is the only collection which he himself edited. He commenced it as early as 1519, worked at it during his stay on the Wartburg, and published it later in Wittenberg. Next to the Bible and the Catechisms it was the most popular of all his books, and Luther considered it his best. "Even the pa-

pists like it," he casually remarked. It contains sermons on the Gospels and Epistles of the Church Year, designed to be read in churches by pastors who were too ignorant to compose their own sermons. Luther thought it better for all concerned that a weak preacher should read to his congregation a good sermon written by some one else than to pass off on them his own poor production.

Together with Melanchthon, Luther became the founder of a new school of preaching. Formerly the sermon occupied a subordinate place only in the Church service; Luther placed it in the very center of public worship. Formerly it consisted of dry dogmatics and scholastic speculations, or it was a recital of all sorts of funny stories, gleaned from the lives of the saints and recited for the amusement of the hearers. It is hardly conceivable what vulgar and coarse jokes were told from the pulpit, especially before and after the Lenten season, for the purpose of provoking what was called Easter laughter. The pulpit was degraded into a school of buffoonery. Luther gave to the sermon its place of dignity; he made the pulpit the throne of sacred eloquence, even more so than in the days of Chrysostom.

A good sermon, he writes, "must be delivered slowly and without screaming or startling gestures. . . . Above all, a sermon must not be long. A preacher must cultivate the art of saying much in few words. If you can not preach an hour, preach half an hour or fifteen minutes. A good preacher will stop when people are anxious to hear more of him and think the best is still coming. But if they

are disgusted and unwilling to listen any longer, wishing that he might soon come to a close, it is a bad thing. If the people say, 'I could have listened to him much longer,' it is good; if they say, 'O pshaw! he just jabbered, and couldn't find the end,' it is very bad."

He also emphasized the need of confining one's self to the subject in hand. "He is a foolish preacher who thinks he must say everything he knows." The sermon ought always to be adapted to the occasion. He tells of a good old divine, who, in a hospital where his audience consisted of poor old women, preached on the married state, its divine sanction, and its blessings.

Quite frequently we find him admonishing his students to use plain and simple language. These warnings were the more in place since the theological students received most of their training by means of the Latin language; they read almost exclusively Latin books; they heard Latin lectures and spoke Latin. Latin was the universal language of the scholars. We can well see how this would influence the style of the preachers, the more so since the German language was as yet uncouth, not at all polished. "In the pulpit speak just as you would at home," is his advice; "use your mother tongue, plain and simple, so that everybody can understand you." Of his "Church-Postille" he says himself, "The Gospel is prepared plainly and carefully, just as a mother prepares the food for her baby."

"When I preach in the Stadt-Kirche I stoop down," he remarked in one of his Table Talks. "I

do not look up to the Doctors and the Masters of Arts, of whom there are about forty in my audience, but I look down upon the crowd of young people, children, and servants, of whom there are several hundreds, sometimes thousands. To them I preach. To them I adapt myself. They need it. If the Doctors do n't care to hear that style of preaching, the door is open for them to leave."

Luther always did use great plainness of speech. Nobody will deny that fact. Those who heard him or read his publications never were left in doubt as to what he meant. But he also, especially in his controversial writings, used language which is coarse beyond measure. He lived in a coarse age, an age that had no sense for what is decent and what is undecent in public utterance. To call a man "a beast," "an ass," "a hog;" to advise him "to go back to his pig-pen," and to use other expressions which to-day no gentleman would dream of employing, was not considered out of place at all. Controversies consisted to a great extent in slinging at the adversary the foulest and vilest abuses. Luther was no exception to the rule. In this respect he was a child of his time. His vocabulary of vituperative expressions of the most forceful kind was as full as that of Geiler, Rabelais, Murner, and other writers of high repute. His opponents heaped calumny and personal abuse upon him, and he paid them back in good measure. Upon the pope, Duke George of Saxony, King Henry VIII of England, Duke Henry of Wolfenbüttel, he poured out the vials of his wrath; of course, not without being provoked by them. His Majesty the King of Eng-

land called Luther, among other flattering things, "an ugly, bleating, lost sheep, that had found refuge in the devil's belly." Luther answered in execrable language, and apologized for it by saying, "If the King of England is at liberty to spit out his impudent lies, I am free to thrust them back again into his throat."

His "plainness of speech" was often a source of embarrassment to the evangelical politicians. The ambassador of the Elector wrote upon one occasion to his master that, according to his opinion, "no harm could be done to the faith nor to the saving of souls if Dr. Martinus would see fit to refrain from using insulting and sarcastic language against the emperor and the government." Several times it occurred that his manuscripts were held back by the court, and that he was requested, by the Elector, "not to publish anything about any prince or noble personage without permission." But Luther was not the kind of man to ask permission. "Not half of what has been done would have been accomplished, if I had followed the advice of the politicians," he wrote to Melanchthon. And again he complains: "Whatever these people [the Catholic princes] do, is all right, even if they drown the country and all its inhabitants in innocent blood; and such people you want me to handle with gloves and to court and flatter them, and say, 'My gracious Lord; how wise and pious you are!'"

There was a good deal of untamed wildness in Luther's make-up, and the attacks of his enemies called forth the whole force of his "Furor Teutonicus." To be sure, his style of controversy would

not be tolerated to-day. But in view of the many attacks made upon his character by Catholic writers in the past and at present, we may ask the question, Were his coarse expressions too strong considering that they were hurled against a system which silenced milder voices by fire and sword? We may find fault with him, but before judging him too severely it is well to ask whether he would have succeeded in arousing his narrow-minded, lethargic, dull, coarse countrymen, if he had addressed them in the polished language of the Humanists or of Goethe?

And he certainly did arouse them. No author was more successful. None understood better the soul of his people and knew how to touch it. Even his enemies could not help imitating his style if they wanted to have a hearing. Duke George, having read his pamphlet on the question whether soldiers could be Christians, and not knowing who its author was, was highly pleased with it, and remarked, "Here is a book which is much better than anything which Luther ever wrote." Upon being informed that no one else than Luther had written it, he said in disgust, "What a pity that such a cursed monk should write a splendid book like this!"

In spite of his immoderate language, Luther was kind toward his opponents, ever ready to forgive them and to help them when in need. He harbored no personal rancor. When Tetzel was on his death-bed in Leipzig, Luther sent him a beautiful letter. When Karlstadt was compelled to flee for his life, not knowing where to take refuge, he applied to Luther. And Luther, whom Karlstadt had

wronged and insulted and attacked, kept him in hiding in his own house, and even urged the Elector to pardon him and grant him permission to settle again in the Electorate.

No trace of coarseness can be detected in Luther's devotional and expository writings. He had a peculiar gift to comfort the afflicted, and some of his best devotional tracts were written to persons who were friendly to the Gospel, to comfort them in their sorrows.

His strong sense of humor, his satirical vein, and also his deeply religious and poetical soul, formed a rare combination of literary qualities, and enabled him to produce the most diversified writings. But all of them, widely different as they were —his hymns as well as his satirical epigrams; his soul-stirring addresses, like his lampoons; his theological treatises and his renderings of the Hebrew seers and singers—were all in the service of the one great idea; viz., the religious and moral regeneration of the German people.

And while writing and preaching with this all-absorbing aim in view, Martin Luther gave to his people another gift of priceless value,—a language. Says Jacob Grimm in his monumental German Grammar: "The language of Luther, owing to its noble purity and its powerful influence, has become the foundation of modern High German. The changes which were made up to the present time are insignificant, and are for the most part not an improvement but a deterioration of its force and lucidity."

CHAPTER XXII.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL VIEWS.

THERE is, perhaps, no field of human activity where the individual is more influenced by the general currents of thought, by what Luther's countrymen call "Zeitgeist," than the sphere of political and social problems. Hereditary tendencies, environment, religious convictions, family or business relations, personal likes and dislikes, all enter into molding one's views and mapping out the course of action.

There is moreover no other sphere of activity where the divergence between theory and practice, between the ideal and the real, between what is desirable and what is possible under existing circumstances, appears as painfully evident as it does here.

The idealist knows what ought to be done, or at least he thinks he does. The man of affairs knows how much can actually be accomplished. Very often these two fail to understand each other. The idealist accuses the man of affairs of lowering the standards. He refuses to accept any compromises. "Aut Cæsar aut nihil"—Either his ideal or nothing. The man of affairs is apt to look upon the idealist as a crank, a well-meaning but useless, if not dangerous, dreamer, who is unwilling to lend a hand in achieving what is an improvement over previous

conditions. Sometimes both tendencies are combined in one man. He has lofty ideals, but he is ready to compromise in order to advance one step at a time, when he sees that he can not reach the goal in one jump. He keeps, however, the goal constantly in view, and presses on toward it. These men, after all, accomplish the most tangible results; but they are the men who are most easily misunderstood, and may sometimes be accused of inconsistency.

Martin Luther belonged to this class of men. The necessary consequences of his fundamental doctrine of the universal priesthood of the believer is a free Church, yet he linked the Church to the State. His doctrine of the freedom of the Christian will result in a free State, yet he was the advocate of the absolute power of the rulers. He used the strongest language against the rulers as a class. And yet Luther denounced revolutionary measures or use of force against those same rulers.

Luther could have incited the evangelical princes and the knights to a war against the emperor for religious liberty; he could have been the leader of the hosts of the peasants in their battle for civic rights. He did not choose to do so. Some say he missed the greatest opportunity of his life. We rather think he did wisely in refusing to be carried away by a popular uprising, widespread though it was, which was premature, carried on by unrestrained passion, but was not the outgrowth of mature conviction and based on ability for self-government.

It is utterly useless in historical matters to spec-

ulate on the question what might have happened if certain events had not taken place or had occurred differently. We can not know what Luther would have done if religious fanaticism and social revolutionism had not developed so rapidly and produced the disastrous results which Luther saw with his own eyes. There is little doubt that he would have taken a different course. But we do know that, ever since the fateful year of the Wittenberg disturbances and since the Peasants' War, Luther had no use for democratic forms of government. "The ass wants the whip, and the mob wants to be governed by compulsion," he was wont to say. The outbreaks convinced him that, to place power into the hands of the common people, meant religious and social anarchy. He never afterward showed the same fervent enthusiasm which permeated his former utterances, for instance, in his "Address to the German Nobility."

He was still more confirmed in his views by the excesses of the Anabaptist radicals and fanatics who, in the year 1534, established the kingdom of heaven in the city of Münster, a commonwealth the chief characteristics of which were religious bigotry, sensual debauchery, despotism, and utter contempt for law and order.

There is certainly a vast difference between Luther's way of looking at the mutual relations between government and people and the modern point of view. He was firmly convinced that whatever form of government happened to exist was in existence by Divine authority. It was, accordingly, never lawful for a Christian to rebel against a Di-

vinely appointed institution. Christian life consists in believing, loving, suffering, not in disorderly clamoring for betterment of outward conditions of life. Absolute monarchism by the grace of God, and democratic government by the people, of the people, for the people, represent two different types, not only of civilization, but of "Weltanschauung." Luther stood with both feet in the former, although he pointed the way to the latter.

Furthermore, to Luther the spiritual blessings of the Gospel were of paramount importance. His whole work hinged, as we have seen, on the change in the relation of the individual to his God. To have his sins forgiven, to be right with God, was the fundamental question. Everything else was of minor concern. It was certainly the duty of every Christian to serve his neighbor as best he could, and also to do the best for his country. But the more political disappointments he had to meet, the less he emphasized this point, though he never receded from it. He never in his whole career identified the Christian religion with any social or political platform.

In our times we frequently meet with the opposite idea. The purely spiritual blessings of the Gospel are brushed aside, and the social and temporal benefits of Christian civilization are considered matters of prime importance. Christianity is to many minds, in the first place, the most potent factor in the progress of civilization in the betterment of the outward conditions of life.

Luther's religion was first a spiritual force. He was a representative of other-worldliness, not, how-

ever, without a very marked admixture of sane this-sidedness. To many, religion is something pertaining essentially to this world, with only a slight and misty sprinkling of other-worldliness.

Again, we must insist that Luther be placed in the light of his time, in order not to underrate his real contributions to the advance march of humanity.

He was the first who freed the secular government from being nothing but the tool of the Church. During all the centuries of the Middle Ages the Church had used the State to further her own interests. But Luther had also to resist the mischievous tendencies of those who held that children of God ought not to pollute themselves by stepping down into a mire of politics, as well as the Biblical literalism of others. Quite a number looked upon the Old Testament as containing the authoritative civil code for society and State, and they endeavored to establish a Christian commonwealth on the basis of the Mosaic legislation.

Luther had common sense enough to take a lively interest in political and social questions, and often took occasion to express his views in sermons and pamphlets, and he was sane enough to distinguish between the transitory order of the Mosaic law and the permanent principles of the Gospel. He enunciated clearly that the political and ceremonial requirements of the Mosaic code are not binding for Christians.

His theory of religious liberty was far in advance of his age. Says he: "The government shall not prevent people from believing and teaching what

appears right to their own minds, be it the truth of the Gospel or an error. It is sufficient if the government repress strife and rebellion." In his sermon on the subject, "Temporal Magistrates, and How Far They have to be Obeyed," he elucidates that the office of the government, as founded upon the Scriptures, is threefold: (1) To establish and preserve peace; (2) To punish the wicked; (3) To protect the innocent. Government can not coerce the faith or the religion of the subjects. Compulsion leads only to hypocrisy. "Heresy is something pertaining to the spiritual world. You can not cut it with iron, nor burn it with fire, nor drown it in water. You can not drive the devil out of the heart by destroying with sword or fire the vessels in which he lives. This is like fighting lightning with a blade of straw."

Correct as these sentiments are, Luther himself did not always carry them into practice. He did not, especially in his later years, grant to others what he demanded for himself; namely, this freedom of conscience. Neither have the Lutheran State Churches exercised tolerance. Where the Lutheran State Church is in power to-day, she still calls upon the civil magistrates to hinder by fines and penalties the free exercise of religious worship, and to curtail the privileges of those citizens who adhere to evangelical denominations which she is pleased to call "sects."

Luther was a close observer of all the movements of his time, and so he could not help noticing the changing social conditions. We have called attention to the fact that the beginning of the six-

teenth century was a period of transition. Germany changed from an agricultural into a commercial country. The discovery of the New World changed the social structure of the Old World. Up to the sixteenth century tilling the soil and handling the products thereof constituted virtually the only means of income. Now commercial companies were formed. Money could be invested and produce more money quite independent of the harvests of the home fields. Slowly money became the basis of the social structure. Its power increased; riches accumulated; the free cities grew and prospered. The old order was passing away, and there evolved the beginnings of our modern social conditions. In a former chapter we have noticed how these changes produced general unrest and dissatisfaction, and how finally, in connection with the religious movement, the social revolution broke forth. The revolt was crushed, but the causes effecting the changes remained at work.

Luther never saw the real cause of the change. He remained to the end of his life a representative of the old order of things. He was convinced that tilling the soil was really the only legitimate and God-ordained means of gaining a livelihood; in the next place came a useful trade. Commerce was evil in itself, and its roots were greed and the passion to get rich. He could not see the justice of lending money and taking interest without doing any work for it. He thought that each man had to work with his own hands; to take money in any other way was outright robbery. He was therefore positively opposed to the taking of interest. Whoever lends

money ought also to assume the risk, and take interest only when his debtor earned enough over and above a fair compensation for his trouble. If, notwithstanding his honest and persistent efforts, he met with reverses, then the creditor ought to bear the loss. Luther's pamphlet on "Commerce and Usury," in which he elaborates his ideas, is called by Professor Schmoller "the most interesting treatise on social and economic questions written during the whole period of the Reformation."

He is very strong in his denunciations of the practice of charging high prices for the necessities of life, simply in order to make money. The idea underlying the formation of trusts is to him inhuman and unchristian. Merchants are entitled to a fair compensation for their risk and for their trouble, but they have no moral right to charge exorbitant prices in order to get rich quickly. He suggests that a court be instituted and intrusted with authority to regulate and fix prices. This, he thinks, would be fair and just to producer and consumer alike.

Interstate commerce is especially objectionable in his eyes. It only breeds extravagance. "Germany can produce everything that we need. Why send money to foreign nations for the purpose of purchasing goods which are not necessary at all? God has cursed us Germans, so that we throw our money, our silver, and our gold into the hands of foreign nations, to make them rich, and remain beggars ourselves. England would have less gold if we would not buy clothes of her; the King of Portugal would have less money if we left him his

spices. Just figure up how much money is sent to foreign countries without any just cause, and you will be surprised that there is a penny left in our German lands."

His views on the use of money are sound. "Riches are not bad in themselves, nor is poverty anything good in itself. Everything depends upon the man who uses it. God does not require of us to be without money, as some fools among the philosophers and some crazy saints among the Christians have taught. He permits some to become rich, but he does not want them to set their hearts and their love on their money. . . . The fatal mistake is made when people consider themselves the owners while they are but stewards. . . . You may earn as much as you can in an honest way and in the fear of God, not in order to gratify your avarice, but in order to use it for others."

He also sees the dangers of riches. "It is very difficult for a rich man to learn poverty in spirit. . . . Man can endure many things, but not good days. If he has too much of a good thing, like an ass, he goes on the ice and breaks his leg, simply because he is faring too well."

Luther was no social reformer. He had no program or thought-out plans for solving the social problems which confronted his age. But personally he lost no opportunity to assist poor mechanics and peasants. He did his best to obtain work for them and went to considerable trouble on their account. Among his letters we find quite a number addressed to princes and noblemen, in which he solicits aid and a chance for work for worthy persons. He had

no far-reaching plans, but he had a heart full of love and sympathy, and had practical help for those with whom he came in contact. And the principles of honesty, fairness, and readiness to help and serve others are, after all, the essential elements of social progress, however the outward conditions may change in adaptation to the changes in civilization.

In his lectures on "Christianity and Socialism," Dr. Washington Gladden asks the question: "Is the economic fact or the spiritual fact fundamental in human society? Are we competitors or are we brothers? This is the central question. Upon the answer to this question the peace and welfare of the nation, of the whole world, must largely depend." No one can read Luther's utterances without perceiving at once that he enunciated the principle of social reconstruction; namely, that we are not competitors but brothers, and that it is our highest privilege to serve God by serving one another.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE THEOLOGIAN.

"I AM one of those among whom St. Augustine classed himself, who advanced gradually by writing and teaching; not of those who at a single bound spring to perfection out of nothing."

In these words Luther himself characterizes the development of his theology. He was pre-eminently a theologian, but not a builder of systems. His theology is not the outgrowth of a speculative mind, nor is it the result of a plan, thought out minutely and worked out symmetrically; it is the answer to the vital questions of a soul crushed by the consciousness of sin and anxious for salvation, an answer drawn from the Scriptures and verified by personal experience. It can not be separated from the Bible, nor can it be understood when cut loose from the outward events and the inner experiences of Luther's life.

In the course of his long life he expressed his views on a great variety of theological subjects, but he never wrote a comprehensive "Systematic Theology," as Melanchthon did in his "Loci Communes," or Calvin in his "Institutions." Not all of his opinions are of equal value. Not everything that he said is in perfect harmony with everything else that he at some other time, under changed conditions, said.

Lutheran theologians of later times cast his views into a hard-and-fast system. They succeeded. But they killed the spirit and the life; nothing but the dead letter remained and the wrangle over the import of the letter.

We can not quite free Luther from all guilt in this matter. Many strong minds see a truth in a light so bright and clear, that they are inclined to believe their own way of looking at it is the only way possible. And the more important the truth is to their own minds, the more jealous they are in guarding it against all deteriorations or admixtures or derivations. Again, strong characters who became strong by struggles, who had to fight their way inch by inch, are very apt to consider as an enemy every one who does not share their views to the last iota. They are independent. They paid dearly for their independence, but they are slow to grant independence to others. They are in danger, while waging war against the intolerant dogmatism of others, of becoming intolerant dogmatists themselves.

Luther shared this weakness of human nature with other good and great men who preceded and followed him. The element of intellectualism, necessarily present in every formulated theology, became preponderant, especially with his advancing years. His own interpretation of Scripture was identified with absolute truth. Certain doctrines, which by their very nature can never be verified experimentally, were held up as tests of orthodoxy. The way was opened for a frozen, barren, heartless, soulless period of Church history; viz., the reign of Lutheran orthodoxy.

We can not help regretting this most unfortunate development, but it must not dim our vision of the truly great and lasting work which Luther the theologian accomplished.

In glancing at these vital points we may refer to what the histories of Christian Doctrine call the material and the formal principles of the Reformation, the first being the doctrine of justification by faith, the other the authority of the Bible.

In other words, Luther placed as the foundation-stone of all theology the work of salvation as wrought by Christ and as appropriated by faith. His theology, is experimental, soteriological, and Christo-centric. It gives an answer to the riddle of the individual life, and this answer is Christ the Savior. "There is but one article and rule in all theology. This rule is true faith and trust in Christ. Into this article all the rest coalesce, and without it the others do not exist. . . . In my heart there dominates but this one article; viz., faith in my Lord Jesus Christ, who is the sole beginning, middle, and end of all my spiritual and divine thoughts that I have day or night."

Why is this central position accorded to Christ? Because in Him, and in Him alone, man's spiritual needs are satisfied. Man's sin, Christ's vicarious atonement, and the efficacy of faith in obtaining all the benefits of the atonement, are the three great truths that give form and shape to the whole superstructure of Luther's theology.

He had a deep and keen sense of sin. Man is sinful and fallen, not only on account of his own transgressions, but he is the corrupt tree sprung

forth from a corrupt seed, and without the Holy Spirit he "can do nothing but sin and proceed from sin to sin." On this point Luther crossed swords with Erasmus of Rotterdam, the head of the Humanists. In this point the radical difference between the Renaissance and the Reformation takes its inception.

The corollary of Luther's doctrine of sin is his teaching of saving grace through the vicarious atonement. Christ, the sinless Son of God, died in the place of man. He was made a curse for man, bore man's punishment and guilt; his righteousness is imputed to the believer. By faith alone man is justified. This justifying faith brings the believer into a mystical union with Christ. "By faith you become bound and united with Christ, so that out of Him and you there arises, as it were, one person. You can evermore hang on Christ, and say with joy and comfort, 'I am Christ, not personally; but Christ's righteousness, victory, life, and everything which He has, is my own;' so that Christ can say, 'I am this poor sinner; that is, all his sins and his death are My sin and My death, since he hangs on Me by faith.' Therefore St. Paul says, 'We are members of His body, of His flesh, and His bones.'"

The two necessary consequences of justifying faith are assurance of salvation and a consistent Christian life. Luther's teaching of evangelical salvation by faith alone without works was then, as it always has been, misunderstood and made an occasion of attacks from his enemies as well as an excuse for license on the part of insincere or fanatical adherents. This was the more so since Luther re-

pudiated strongly any obligation of the Christian to the law. The believer is "a new creature, a new tree. Therefore all those modes of speech which are customary in law, as 'a believer should, or is bound to do good work,' do not belong here. As it is not proper to say, 'the sun should shine, but it does this of itself, unbidden,' so a good tree of itself brings forth good fruits. Three and seven *are* ten; they are not first bound to be ten. To say of the sun that it *ought* to shine, of a believer that he *must* do good works, is ridiculous."

The source of Luther's theology is the Bible. As high as he placed the Word of God, he did not adhere to any theory of verbal or plenary inspiration. The Bible was to him the Word of God because it contained the message of Christ. "Herein agree all the genuine holy books, that they all preach Christ. . . . That which does not teach Christ is not Apostolic, though St. Peter or St. Paul teaches it. That which preaches Christ is Apostolic, though Judas, Annas, Pilate, or Herod teaches it." He was indifferent to questions of authorship, of historical accuracy in the Biblical records, and to minor differences. "What matter if Moses did not write it?" he said of the Book of Genesis. He freely expressed his doubts as to the canonicity of the Book of Revelation, of the Epistle of Jude, Second Peter, and Hebrews. Accordingly he considered of special importance the books from which he had learned the great lessons of his life. "The Gospel of St. John and his First Epistle, the Epistles of St. Paul, especially those to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and the First Epistle of St. Peter, are the

books that instruct us concerning Christ and teach us all that is necessary and salutary for us to know, even though you should never see or hear another book. In comparison with these, therefore, the Epistle of St. James is actually nothing but an epistle of straw, for it has in it nothing whatever of the Gospel."

In his views of the sacraments he could not completely divest himself of the old Catholic and scholastic views. While rejecting five of the seven sacraments of the Church, he attached to the two which he retained an importance wholly beyond what is warranted by a sane interpretation of the Scriptures. The elements of the sacraments were to him actual transmitters of Divine grace; not only visible signs and tokens of God's condescending love. His doctrine was not clear. It gave rise to many quarrels and to the later doctrine of baptismal regeneration irrespective of any conditions to be fulfilled by the human recipient. This doctrine necessarily exerted a baneful influence over the spiritual life of the Church.

Of great practical importance was Luther's doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers. The two truths—namely, salvation by faith, and priesthood of the believer—overthrew the foundations of the Catholic Church. They liberated the individual conscience from the dominion of the priest; they raised good works from the low plane, as means of earning God's favor in spite of deficient moral life, to the higher plane of natural fruits of a life which is in fellowship with the Master; they erased the line of demarcation between things spiritual and

things temporal, and made life a unit, one great service to God and mankind.

Luther's theology has exerted a great and lasting influence, and is still dominating a large portion of evangelical Christianity. The vital truths which can be experimentally verified will continue to influence the teaching and practice of all evangelical Churches. Those remnants of mediæval scholasticism which partially vitiated his theology will be eliminated in accordance with the growing appreciation of the scientific value of Christian experience. Thus Luther's theology may serve as a guide-post in finding a way out of the present-day difficulties. There is no other great religious leader since the days of Martin Luther who emphasized the vital points of his theology as much, and at the same time brushed aside his scholastic opinions as did John Wesley, and it is interesting to note that, of late, German theologians are inclined to consider the founder of Methodism as "the greatest Lutheran whom England ever produced."

CHAPTER XXIV.

LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

The closing years of Luther's life are somewhat disappointing. His great work was practically done when he left Koburg Castle in the year 1530. The remaining sixteen years of his life were filled with a variety of labors, partially also with controversies, but they really add only little to the work of the previous fourteen years.

He had the great joy of seeing the spread of the Reformation. A number of German States—as, for instance, Brandenburg, the Palatinate, and others—adopted the evangelical doctrines; city after city followed; the Archbishop of Cologne declared that his study of the Bible had led him to see the truth of the evangelical doctrines. Henry of Saxony, the successor of Luther's bitter enemy, Duke George, and his wife favored reformatory movements, and even invited Luther to preach in Leipzig. The majority of the Electors were Protestants and the aged Reformer had reason to hope that the next Emperor of Germany might be a Protestant. The second generation of evangelicals was growing up. Those who had been trained from their early childhood in Luther's Catechism and in his German Bible, who heard his hymns sung since the time of their tender infancy, were now men and women, ready to take

up the work and carry it on. The obvious success of the Reformation gladdened the heart of the leader, although it increased his work, because everywhere his advice was solicited in matters of Church organization, worship, and creed; difficult questions were referred to him; he was in a measure "the evangelical pope of Germany."

But there were also a good many signs of the rapid approach of age. In fact, before he reached his fiftieth year Luther was an old man. His bodily infirmities increased. He suffered agonies with kidney troubles; was afflicted with severe and prolonged attacks of headache; asthma and insomnia sapped his strength; one of his eyes grew weak and dim. Adding to these troubles the many petty and annoying controversies, which proved a constant strain on his nerves, we can understand that he became more irritable, at times even passionate.

He found himself at variance with the whole law faculty of his own university, and in consequence thereof he severed the bonds of friendship with his life-long friend, the lawyer Schurf. There was danger of an estrangement even from his intimate associate and friend Melanchthon. The latter became more timid and more pessimistic as the years advanced. His persistent efforts to find dogmatic formulas acceptable to all parties caused much dissatisfaction among the more radical Lutherans. In compliance with the orders of his Elector, he continued to attend theological conferences and to take part in the discussions, but with his heart and his love he lived far away in sunny ancient Greece. He was tired

of the "rabies theologorum," the fury of the theologians. "I sometimes had to endure almost unbearable slavery," he complained, "when Luther was carried away by his temper, because he was of a quarrelsome disposition, more so than was necessary for his dignity and the common welfare."

Luther's old friends, who had been his associates in the work and his companions at the table, moved away or died one by one. He felt lonesome.

Notwithstanding the spread of the Reformation, the real progress of the cause of Christ was far from satisfying him. He became disgusted with the city and the University of Wittenberg, and complained much of the deportment of the students, whom he considered too wild and noisy. Perhaps it did not occur to him that two thousand students coming from all parts of Europe were harder to manage, especially in a little town, than were two hundred some thirty years before. Calling Wittenberg a "Sodom," he made up his mind to leave the city and move to some quiet place in the country. "Away from such a Sodom! I would sooner wander about and beg my bread than vex my last days with the irregular proceedings at Wittenberg." He actually left the city, and only after urgent entreaties did he yield and return.

Insomnia and frequently recurring attacks of despondency made life a burden to him. Yet, in spite of all, he continued to do the work of three ordinary men. His irritability cropped out in his controversial writings, and especially in the two pamphlets which he wrote against the Jews; viz., "Of the Jews and Their Lies," and "Of Shem Hamphoras,"

both of them written in 1542. He believed all the stories told about their poisoning the wells and stealing children in order to use their blood. We find him even encouraging acts of violence against them.

The most fatal event of Luther's last years was his assent to the dual marriage of Landgrave Philip of Hesse. In spite of his energetic support of the evangelical cause, Philip led a dissolute life. His married life was unhappy in the extreme. His wife, whom he had married when yet in his teens, a daughter of Duke George of Saxony, was sickly and given to drink. Having lived with other women for years, Philip was fully aware of the inconsistency of his position. He confessed that, although he fought for the pure Gospel, he would go to hell, in case a bullet should strike him. He finally resolved to marry the woman with whom he was enamored, without becoming divorced from his legal wife, and asked the advice of the Wittenberg theologians. They tried to dissuade him, called his attention to the scandal that would follow, but finally, although reluctantly, expressed their opinion that he might be granted a dispensation to do so if his wife consented and if the marriage were kept an absolute secret. The marriage was performed in the presence of Melanchthon. Very soon it was whispered about, then proclaimed from the housetops, and a storm of righteous indignation was raised by the Catholics.

No doubt Luther was mistaken in his decision, but it can not be said that he consented to the marriage on account of political reasons, fearing perhaps the desertion by the landgrave of the evangel-

ical party. Luther's notions of the matrimonial relations and of womanhood sometimes fell short of the high ideal which he at other times set forth. We can not extenuate him fully, yet we must not forget that life in all courts, secular as well as spiritual, was at that time on an incredibly low plane of morality. Cardinal Albrecht kept a regular harem. When residing at Halle he had one of his female friends carried into the castle hidden in a relic chest, in order to avoid unpleasant gossip; but the woman had to sneeze and was discovered. Duke Henry of Braunschweig, who showed unlimited indignation at the landgrave's marriage, lived with mistresses, and at one time, in order to be unmolested, pretending that his mistress was dead, had a life-sized wax doll buried in state, had regular masses read, and meanwhile the woman was living in seclusion in one of his castles. Luther might be led to think that a dual marriage was preferable to a life of scandalous dissoluteness and shame.

But notwithstanding this unfortunate error in judgment and the signs of becoming aged and decrepit, Luther's hold on God, his personal communion with God, remained unshaken. He continued in the same spirit which Veit Diederich, his companion at Koburg Castle, describes: "I can not but admire how singularly full of faith and hope this man is in these bitter and serious times. But he is so, and is getting still more so every day on account, no doubt, of his most diligent study of the Word of God. No day passes without his spending at least three hours in prayer, and those hours that would be best for study." Luther was always

a man of prayer, and never more so than during his last few years.

One of the most remarkable instances of his availing prayer is told in connection with Melanchthon's serious illness at Weimar when he was to take part in an important conference. Hastening to the bedside of his friend he found him at the brink of eternity. His speech and consciousness were gone, his eyes nearly set, the physicians had given up all hope. Luther cried out, "O God, how has the devil injured this Thy instrument!" Then he went to the window and prayed with the fervor of conquering faith. Then he rose, and, taking Melanchthon by the hand, said: "Be of good cheer, Philip, thou shalt not die."

"Do not detain me," whispered Melanchthon; "for God's sake, do not detain me. I am on my way to my eternal rest. Let me depart; nothing better can befall me."

"No, indeed," called Luther, "you must serve God a little longer," and he called for something to eat, and literally forced the sick man to take nourishment. When Melanchthon gained sufficient strength to open his eyes, he saw on the wall opposite his bed in large letters the words from the 118th Psalm, "I shall not die but live, and declare the works of Jehovah."

Not many years after this incident the time came that Luther should be translated. On November 10, 1545, he celebrated for the last time the anniversary of his birth in the midst of his family and his friends. A week later he finished the exposition of the Book of Genesis in his lecture-room with

the following words: "I can do no more. I am weak. God grant me a blessed end." Writing to a friend, he remarked: "I am tired of the world and the world is tired of me. I am as ready to depart as a traveler is to leave his lodging-place."

The Counts of Mansfeld desired him to act as arbiter in some quarrels which they had among themselves. Three times he went on his errand of peace, though feeble in body. On the last trip, in January, 1546, he was accompanied by his sons. A conference of the dissenting parties was arranged for at Eisleben. Luther's health was failing rapidly. His wife and the friends at home were very apprehensive, but, sick though he was, he kept up his spirits. He wrote a number of letters full of comfort and good cheer.

"Only read, dear Käthe, St. John and the Small Catechism, of which you once said to me that everything in the book was said of you. For you want to care for your God precisely as though He were not Almighty and could not create ten Dr. Martins if the old one were to be drowned in the Saale, or burned in the oven, or be caught in Wolf's bird-trap. Dismiss your cares, for I have One who cares for me better than you or angels can. . . . Only pray, and let God do all the caring; for it is written, 'Casting all your care upon Him.'"

The arbitration proceedings drew to an end. Luther thought of returning home. But his strength was gone. Often he spoke of his near departure. On February 16th he wrote in the Latin language the last words we possess from his pen. They are worth being recorded:

"No one can understand Vergil in his 'Bucolics,' unless he has been a shepherd for at least five years. No one can understand Vergil in his Georgics, unless he has been a tiller of the soil for at least five years. No one can fully understand Cicero in his Epistles unless he has moved about in a large commonwealth for twenty-five years. No one can fancy to have thoroughly mastered the Holy Scriptures unless he has for a hundred years lived in the Church together with the prophets Elijah and Elisha, with John the Baptist, with Christ and His apostles. Do not tempt this divine Æneid, but bow down low and full of adoration. We are beggars. This is true. February 16th, A. D. 1546."

The next day he was seized with alarming pain in his chest. He found no rest, neither in reclining or walking. His friends assembled, physicians were summoned, the Count of Mansfeld and his countess hastened to minister to him.

Luther was heard to pray: "O Lord Jesus Christ, I commend my poor soul to Thee. O Heavenly Father, I know that, although I shall be taken away from this life, I shall live forever with Thee. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Then everything was quiet. Pastor Jonas bent over the dying man and called into his ear: "Reverend Father, do you die in the faith of your Lord Jesus Christ, and in the doctrine which you preached in His name?" A clear and distinct "Yes" was

heard in answer. Then he went to sleep, and was no more, for God had taken him.

In the city of Eisleben, where he was born, he died on February 18, 1546.

The news of Luther's death spread like wildfire. A special messenger, carrying a full account of the last days and the dying hours written by Dr. Jonas, was dispatched at once to Wittenberg. Melanchthon was in his class-room, lecturing on the Epistle to the Romans, when the news arrived. "O God," he exclaimed, "gone is the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

It was a sad procession that started from Eisleben for Wittenberg. In all the cities and villages through which it passed the bells were tolling, and the people crowded the streets, paying their last tribute to the great man whose lips were now closed forever.

Late at night the cortege reached Halle. The clergy, the City Council, men, women, and children, met the procession outside the city walls, and accompanied it to the church. Luther's hymn, "Aus tiefer Not Schrei ich zu Dir," was sung, but the words could hardly be understood; every one was sobbing. On February 22d, Wittenberg was reached. While the bells tolled, the hearse which carried the remains of the eminent servant of God, and the people, followed by his widow, his four children, and an immense concourse of people, was driven to the Schloss-Kirche. The casket was borne through the doors on which twenty-nine years before the young monk had nailed his Theses. Pastor Buggenhagen preached a sermon which was often

interrupted by his own tears as well as by the sobbing of the audience. Melanchthon followed with a Latin address, and then the casket was lowered into the crypt near the pulpit.

Martin Luther while living had proved stronger than the emperor and the pope. "By his word and his pen alone," says Professor Hausrath, "he had wrung Germany from the mighty emperor in whose empire 'the sun never set.' The professor, whose salary was never more than four hundred florins a year, had bought out the owner of the whole treasure of all the indulgences. Victor over emperor and pope, he died."

Yet he was not dead. Frederick Myconius wrote to the Elector these prophetic words: "This Dr. Martin Luther is not dead at all; he will not die, he can not die. Now he will be alive more than ever before."

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